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THE CONQUERED

LAST summer, just before my proper holiday, I went to stay with an aunt who lives on the borders of Wales, where there are so many orchards. I must say I went there simply as a duty because I used to stay a lot with her when I was a boy and she was, in those days, very good to me. However, I took plenty of books down so that it should not be waste of time.

Of course, when I got there, it was really not so bad. They made a great fuss of me. My aunt was as tolerant as she used to be in the old days, leaving me to do exactly as I liked. My cousin Jessica, who is just my age, had hardly changed at all, though they both looked different with their hair up, but my younger cousin Ruth, who used to be very lively and something of a tomboy, had altered quite a lot. She had become very quiet; at least, on the day I arrived she was lively enough and talked about the fun we used to have there, but afterwards she became more quiet every day, or, perhaps, it was that I noticed it more. She remembered far more about what we used to do than I did, but I suppose that is only natural since she had been there all the time in between and I do not suppose anything very exciting had happened to her, whereas I have been nearly everywhere.

But what I wanted to say is that not far from my aunt's house, on the top of a little slope, on which there was an apple orchard, was a house with French windows and a large green lawn in front, and in this lived a very charming Welsh lady whom my cousins knew. Her grandfather had the house built and it was his own design. It is said that he had been quite a friend of the Prince Consort, who once, I believe, actually stayed there for a night.

I knew the house very well, but I had never met any of the family because they had not always occupied it, and, in any case, they would have been away at the times that I went to my aunt for holidays. Now only this one grand-daughter was left of the family; her father and mother were dead, and she had just come back to live there. I found out all this at breakfast the morning after I came, when Jessica said :—

"Ruthie, we must take Frederick to see Gwyneth."

"Oh, yes," said Ruthie, "let's go to-day."

"And who is Gwyneth?" said I.

Jessica laughed; "You will be most impressed, won't he mother?"

"Yes," said my aunt, categorically.

However, we did not call on her that afternoon because it poured with rain all day and it did not seem worth while, though Ruthie appeared in her mackintosh and goloshes ready to go, and Jessica and I had some difficulty in dissuading her.

I did not think it was necessary to do any reading the first day, so I just sat and talked to the girls, and after tea Jessica and I even played duets on the piano, which had not been tuned lately, while Ruthie turned over the pages.

The next morning, though the grass was wet and every movement of the trees sent down a shower of rain, the sun began to shine brightly through the clouds. I should certainly have been taken to see their wonderful friend in the afternoon, only she herself called in the morning. I was sitting at one end of the dining room, reading Tourguéniev with a dictionary and about three grammars and I dare say I looked very busy. I do not know where my aunt was when she came, and the girls were upstairs. I heard a most beautiful voice, that was very high pitched though, not low, say :

"All right, I will wait for them in here,"

and she came into the room. Of course, I had expected her to be nice because my cousins liked her so much, but still they do not meet many people down there and I thought they would be impressed with the sort of person I would be quite used to. But she really was charming.

She was not very young, older, I should say, than Jessica. She was very tall and she had very fair hair. But the chief thing about her was her finely carved features which gave to her face the coolness of stone and a certain appearance of immobility, though she laughed very often and talked a lot. When she laughed she raised her chin a little and looked down her nose in a bantering way as though she found everybody rather young. And she had a really perfect nose. If I had been a sculptor I should have put it on every one of my statues. When she saw me, she laughed and said:

"Ah! I am disturbing you," and sat down, smiling to herself.

I did not have time to say anything to her before my cousins came in. She kissed Jessica and Ruthie and kept Ruthie by her side.

"This is our cousin Frederick," said Jessica.

"We have told you about him," said Ruthie gravely.

Gwyneth laughed.

"Oh, I recognized him, but how could I interrupt so busy a person! Let me tell you what I have come for. Will you come to tea to-morrow and bring Mr. Trenier?"; she laughed at me again.

We thanked her and then my aunt came in.

"How do you do, Gwyneth?" she said. "Will you stay to lunch?"

"No, thank you so much, Mrs. Haslett," she answered, "I only came to ask Jessica and Ruthie to tea to-morrow, and, of course, to see your wonderful nephew. You will come too, won't you?"

"Yes, thank you," said my aunt. "You and Frederick ought to find many things to talk about together."

Gwyneth looked at me and laughed.

Ruthie went out to make some coffee and afterwards Gwyneth sat in the window-seat drinking it and talking.

"What were you working at so busily when I came in?" she asked me.

"I was only trying to read Tourguéniev in the original," I said.

"Do you like Tourguéniev very much?" she said laughing.

"Yes," I said. "Do you?"

"Oh, I have only read one, *Fumée.*"

She stayed for about an hour, laughing and talking all the time. I found her really very charming. She was like a personification, in a restrained manner, of Gaiety. Yes, really, very much like Milton's *L'Allegro.*

The minute she was gone, Jessica said excitedly:

"Now, Frederick, aren't you impressed?" and Ruthie looked at me anxiously until I answered:

"Yes, I really think I am."

The next day we went there to tea. It was a beautiful warm day and we took the short cut across the fields and down a road now overgrown with grass to the bottom of the little slope on which her house was built. There is an old Roman road not far from here and I am not quite sure whether that road is not part of it. We did not go into the house but were taken at once to the orchard at the back, where she was sitting near a table, and we all sat down with her. The orchard was not very big, and, of course, the trees were no longer in flower, but the fruit on them was just beginning to grow and look like tiny apples and pears. At the other end, some white chickens strutted about in the sunlight. We had tea outside.

She talked a lot but I cannot remember now what she said; when she spoke to me it was nearly always to tell me about her grandfather and the interesting people who used to come to visit him.

When it began to get cool we went into the house across the flat green lawn and through the French window. We went to a charming room : on the wall above the piano were some Japanese prints on silk, which were really beautiful. Outside, it was just beginning to get dark.

She sang to us in a very nice high soprano voice, and she chose always gay light songs which suited her excellently. She sang that song of Schumann, *Der Nussbaum,* but then it is possible to sing that lightly and happily though it is more often sung with a trace of sadness in it. Jessica played for her. She is a rather good accompanist. I never could accompany singers. But I played afterwards : I played some Schumann, too.

"Has Ruthie told you I am teaching her to sing?" said Gwyneth. "I don't know much about it, and her voice is not like mine, but I remember more or less what my master taught me."

"No," I said, looking at Ruthie, "sing for us now and let me hear?"

"No," said Ruthie, and blushed a little. She never used to be shy. Gwyneth pulled Ruthie towards her.

"Now do sing. The fact is you are ashamed of your teacher."

"No," said Ruthie, "only you know I can't sing your songs."

Gwyneth laughed. "You would hardly believe what a melancholy little creature she is. She won't sing anything that is not tearful."

"But, surely," I said, "in the whole of Schubert and Schumann you can find something sad enough for you?"

"No," said Ruthie, looking at the carpet, "I don't know any Schumann; and Schubert is never sad, even in the sad songs. Really, I can't sing what Gwyneth sings."

"Then you won't?" I said, feeling rather annoyed with her.

"No," she said flushing, and she looked out of the window.

Ruthie and Jessica are quite different. Jessica is, of course, like her mother, but Ruthie is like her father, whom I never knew very well.

Next morning, immediately after breakfast, I went for a walk by myself, and, though I went by a very roundabout way, I soon found myself near Gwyneth's house, and, perhaps, that was not very surprising. I came out by a large bush of travellers' nightshade. I believe that is its name. At least, it is called old man's beard too, but that does not describe it when it is in flower at all. You know that it has tiny white waxen flowers, of which the buds look quite different from the open flower, so that it looks as though there are two different kinds of flowers on one stem. But what I wanted to say was, I came out by this bush and there, below me, was the grass-covered road, with new cartwheel ruts in it, which made two brown lines along the green where the earth showed. Naturally, I walked down it and stood by the fence of the orchard below her house. I looked up between the trees and there she was coming down towards me.

"Good morning, Mr. Trenier," she said laughing, "why are you deserting Tourguéniev?"

"It is such a lovely morning," I said, opening the gate for her, "and, if I had known I should meet you, I should have felt even less hesitation."

She laughed, and we walked slowly across the grass, which was still wet with dew. It was a perfectly lovely day, with a soft pale blue sky and little white clouds in it, and the grass was wet enough to be bright green.

"O, look!" she said suddenly, and pointed to two enormous mushrooms, like dinner plates, growing at our feet.

"Do you want them?" I asked, stooping to pick them.

"Oh, yes," she said, "when they are as big as that, they make excellent sauces. Fancy, such monsters growing in a night! They were not here yesterday."

"And last week I had not met you," I said smiling.

She laughed, and took the mushrooms from me.

"Now we must take them to the cook," she said, "and then you shall come for a little walk with me."

As we crossed the lawn to the house, she was carrying the pink-lined mushrooms by their little stalks.

"They look like the sunshades of Victorian ladies," I said.

She laughed and said, "Did you know that Jenny Lind came here once?"

Afterwards, we walked along the real Roman road, now only a pathway with grass growing up between the stones and tall trees overshadowing it. On the right is a hill where the ancient Britons made a great stand against the Romans, and were defeated.

"Did you know this was a Roman road?" she asked. "Just think of the charming Romans who must have walked here, and I expect they developed a taste for apples. Does it shock you to know that I like the Romans better than the Greeks?"

I said "No," but now, when I think of it, I believe I *was* a little shocked, although, when I think of the Romans as the Silver Age, I see that silver was more appropriate to her than gold.

She was really very beautiful, and it was a great pleasure to be with her because she walked in such a lovely way. She moved quickly but she somehow preserved that same immobility which, though she laughed and smiled so often, made her face cool like stone and calm.

After this we went for many walks and picnics, sometimes the girls came too, but sometimes we went together. We climbed the old battle hill and she stood at the top looking all around at the orchards on the plain below.

I had meant to stay only a week, but I decided to stay a little longer, or, rather, I stayed on without thinking about it at all. I had not told my aunt and the girls that I was going at the end of the week, so it did not make any difference, and I knew they would expect me to stay longer. The only difference it made was to my holiday, and, after all, I was going for the holiday to enjoy myself, and I could not have been happier than I was there.

I remember how one night I went out by myself down in the direction of her house, where my steps always seemed to take me. When I reached the travellers' nightshade it was growing dark. For a moment I looked towards her house and a flood of joy came into my soul, and I began to think how strange it was that, although I have met so many interesting people, I should come there simply by chance and meet her. I walked towards the entrance of a little wood, and, full of a profound joy and happiness, I walked in between the trees. I stayed there for a long time imagining her coming gaily into the wood where the moonlight shone through the branches. And I remember thinking suddenly how we have grown used to believing night to be a sad and melancholy time, not romantic and exciting as it used to be. I kept longing for some miracle to bring her there to me, but she did not come and I had to go home.

Then, one evening, we all went to her house for music and conversation. On the way there Ruthie came round to my side and said :

"Frederick, I have brought with me a song that I can sing and I will sing this time if you want me to."

"Yes, I certainly want you to," I said, walking on with her, "I want to see how she teaches."

"Yes," said Ruthie. "You do see that I could not sing her songs, don't you?"

In the old days, Ruthie and I used to get on very well, better than I got on with Jessica, who was inclined to keep us in order then, and I must say it was very difficult for her to do so.

When we got there, right at the beginning of the evening, Gwyneth sang a little Welsh song. And I felt suddenly disappointed. I always thought that the Welsh were melancholy in their music, but, if she sang it sadly at all, it was with the gossipy sadness of the tea after a funeral. However, afterwards we talked, and I forgot the momentary impression.

During the evening Ruthie sang. She sang Brahms' *An die Nachtigall,* which was really very foolish of her because I am sure it is not an easy thing to sing with its melting softness and its sudden cries of ecstasy and despair. Her voice was very unsteady, of a deeper tone than Gwyneth's, and sometimes it became quite hoarse from nervousness. Gwyneth drew her down to the sofa beside her. She laughed:

"I told you nothing was sad enough for her."

Ruthie was quite pale from the ordeal of singing before us.

"It is rather difficult, isn't it?" I said.

"Yes," said Ruthie, flushing.

"Have you ever heard a nightingale?" asked Gwyneth of me.

"No," I said.

"Why, there is one in the wood across here, I have heard it myself," said Jessica, "on just such a night as this," she added, laughing and looking out of the window at the darkness coming to lie on the tops of the apple trees beyond the green lawn.

"Ah! you must hear a nightingale as well as read Tourguéniev, you know," said Gwyneth.

I laughed.

But, later on in the evening, I was sitting near the piano looking over a pile of music by my side; suddenly, I came across Chopin's *Polnische Lieder.* It is not often that one finds them. I looked up in excitement and said:

"Oh, do you know the *Polens Grabgesang?* I implore you to sing it."

She laughed a little at my excitement and said:

"Yes, I know it. But I can't sing it. It does not suit me at all. Mrs. Haslett, your nephew actually wants me to sing a funeral march."

"Oh, please, do sing it," I said, "I have only heard it once before in my life. Nobody ever sings it. I have been longing to hear it again."

"It does not belong to me, you know," she said, "I found it here, it must have belonged to my father." She smiled at me over the edge of some music she was putting on the piano. "No, I can't sing it. That is really decisive."

I was so much excited about the song because I shall never forget the occasion on which I first heard it. I have a great friend, a very wonderful man, a perfect genius, in fact, and a very strong personality, and we have evenings at his house and we talk about nearly everything and have music, too, sometimes. Often when I used to go, there was a woman there, who never spoke much but always sat near my friend. She was not particularly beautiful and had a rather unhappy face, but one evening my friend turned to her suddenly and put his hand on her shoulder and said "Sing for us."

She obeyed, without a word. Everybody obeys him at once. And she sang this song. I shall never forget all the sorrow and pity for the sorrows of Poland that she put into it. And the song, too, is wonderful. I do not think I have ever heard in my life anything so terribly moving as the part "O Polen, mein Polen," which is repeated several times. Everyone in the room was stirred, and, after she had sung it, we talked about nothing but politics and the Revolution for the whole evening. I do not think she was Polish either. After a few more times she did not come to the evenings any more, and I have never had the opportunity of asking him about her. And although, as I said, she was not beautiful, when I looked at Gwyneth again, it seemed to me that some of her beauty had gone and I thought to myself quite angrily:

"No, of course, she could not sing that song. She would have been on the side of the conquerors!"

And I felt like this all the evening until we began to walk home.

Before we had gone far Jessica said:

"Wouldn't you like to stay and listen for the nightingale, Frederick? We can find our way home without you."

"Yes," I said, "where can I hear her?"

"The best place," said Jessica, "is to sit on the fallen tree—that is where I heard it. Go into the wood by the wild-rose bush with pink roses on it. Do you know it?"

"Yes."

"Don't be very late," said my aunt.

"No," I answered and left them. I went into the little wood and sat down on the fallen tree looking up and waiting, but there was no sound. I felt that there was nothing I wanted so much as to hear her sad notes. I remember thinking how Nietzsche said that Brahms' melancholy was the melancholy of impotence, not of power, and I remember feeling that there was much truth in it, when I thought of his *Nachtigall* and then of Keats. And I sat and waited for the song that came to

> . . . the sad heart of Ruth, when sick for home
> She stood in tears amid the alien corn.

Suddenly, I heard a sound, and, looking round, I saw Gwyneth coming through the trees. She caught sight of me and laughed :

"You are here, too," she said, "I came to hear Jessica's nightingale."

"So did I," I said, "but I do not think she will sing to-night."

"It is a beautiful night," she said, "anybody should want to sing on such a lovely night."

I took her back to her gate and I said good-night and closed the gate behind her. But, all the same, I shall remember always how beautiful she looked, standing under the apple trees by the gate, in the moonlight, her smile resting like the reflection of light on her carved face. Then, however, I walked home feeling angry and annoyed with her, but, of course, that was foolish. Because it seems to me now that the world is made up of gay people and sad people, and, however charming and beautiful the gay people are, their souls can never really meet the souls of those who are born for suffering and melancholy simply because they are made in a different mould. Of course, I see that this is a sort of dualism, but still it seems to me to be the truth, and I believe my friend, of whom I spoke, is a dualist, too, in some things.

I did not stay more than a day or two after this, though my aunt and the girls begged me to do so. I did not see Gwyneth again, only something took place which was a little ridiculous in the circumstances.

The evening before I went Ruthie came and said, half in an anxious whisper :

"Frederick, will you do something very important for me?"

"Yes, if I can," I said, "what is it?"

"Well, it is Gwyneth's birthday to-morrow, and she is so rich it is hard to think of something to give her."

"Yes," I said without much interest.

"But do you know what I thought of? I have bought an almond tree—the man has just left it out in the shed, and I am going to plant it at the edge of the lawn so that she will see it to-morrow morning. So it will have to be planted in the middle of the night, and I wondered if you would come and help me."

"But is it the right time of the year to plant an almond tree—in August?"

"I don't know," said Ruthie, "but, surely, the man in the nursery would have said if it is not. You can sleep in the train, you know. You used always to do things with me."

"All right, I will," I said, "only we need not go in the middle of the night—early in the morning will do, before it is quite light."

"Oh, thank you so much," said Ruthie trembling with gratitude and excitement, "but don't tell anyone, will you—not even Jessica?"

"No," I said.

Exceedingly early in the morning, long before it was light, Ruthie came into my room, in her dressing gown, to wake me, looking exactly as she used to do. We went quietly downstairs and through the wet grass to Gwyneth's house, Ruthie carrying the spade and I the tree. It was still rather dark when we reached there, but Ruthie had planned the exact place before.

We hurried with the work. I did the digging and Ruthie stood with the tree in her hand looking up at the house. We hardly spoke.

Ruthie whispered, "We must be quiet. That is her window. She will be able to see it as soon as she looks out. She is asleep now."

"Look here," I said, "don't tell her that I planted it, because it may not grow. I can't see very well."

"Oh, but she must never know that either of us did it."

"But are you going to give her a present and never let her know who it is from?"

"Yes," said Ruthie.

"I think that is rather silly," I said.

Ruthie turned away.

We put the tree in. I have never heard whether it grew or not. Just as the sun was rising, we walked back and that morning I went away.

DOROTHY EDWARDS.

BIRTHDAY RUMINATIONS

Now I can see the creeping edge of life
Threaten the cliff where my flesh-image waits.
The semaphore of blanched appealing paws,
Dead-leaf skeletons in once-read books,
Impotently beckons from the beach.

The sad sea-lumber, barnacled delights,
Fret but retard not, founder in the tide
Rattling the relics of our royal state,
Lorn Lackland's treasure, drowned Mnemosyne
Mashed in scurf and grit to dumb fish-fodder.

Shall we go down if we can find the steps?
Inspect the chaos of dismembered sense?
That dove, that gull, that what-not we possessed
Until significance broke time from tense,
Till eyes forgot their grammar, hands their stress.

If tears must be associate with despair,
Touch follow sight, then both report decay
Unless identity can be disproved,
Weeping judged wanton, foreign to the loss;
A free creation in a mind at peace.

The crepitation of the restless grains
And the soft integration of fresh worlds
And the vermiculation of the flesh
Is the procession, process, pastoral;
The piscine epic, mammal tragedy.

RACE DAY

It is Desire creates our world;
With his great tapers the submissive suns
Lighting dark veins where
The virgin spirit her few furlongs runs.
In a race through silence hurled
To the absolute winning-post
Limbs so ineffable and rare
Must soon in vaporous years be lost.

Slyly judicious Thought spreads out his plumes,
For she is not too far and cannot climb
Out of the narrow cinder-track
The blood burnt in the tender grass of time.
Nearer and nearer to her small white flank he comes
Till her poor bosom labours with her breath,
Seeing him wave the sullen black
Flag of the judge Death.

Unnatural consummation must take place
In the sophisticated glade
Where she goes in all cold and white
Who yet comes out a maid.
Leda beneath the fragrant swan's embrace
Conceived divinely, but here netted skies
Let fall no balm of unguent light
Through branched perplexities.

Now man's great day is almost done;
The colonels and the touts depart.
Still lingers, tiny on the Down,
A kike conversing with a tart.
The crammed last bus, last Hope, is gone
And we, benighted, squeamish girls,
Coldly regard how, darkly blown,
The crowd's foul pleasure-litter whirls.

RIMBAUD IN AFRICA

In the character of the damned conjurer.

Through my small town I roamed, a taunting ghost,
Out of a world like rock and wind to yours
And counted friends and honour nothing lost
To feed the inner pride which burned my hours.

Faustus, whom your academy once crowned,
Spent midnight oil on ill-spelt, smutty books;
Your approbation's dirty insult drowned
In comradeship with idiots and crooks.

Beauty is epicene, whipped slave to show;
Yet Helen swan-like glided to my bed,
Whom I put scornfully away as though
I sought no pleasure in the life I led.

Such hot disdain scorched desert solitude
Around me, where I practised magic art,
From elemental soul sublimned a crude
Companion who would share no human heart.

All the devotion of my spirit yearned
On this frail vessel and refined its clay
Till with slow eyes it answered me and turned
My pride to wings and went its lonely way.

Now Faustus in the desert trades for gold,
Nations acknowledge his peculiar spell;
An utter silence feeds the pride grown old;
Respect is mockery and sharpens hell.

DON JUAN QUEASY

She is a solitude in which arise
No wings to break the tranquil eyes' repose,
An arctic stillness where the traveller lies
Dazed with such silence in such perfect snows.

The plains of innocence and childish pride
Yield not like ice to tracks of prowling fears
Though my hot-muzzled passion gnaws her side
To turn that ecstacy to delirious tears.

I only live to watch her winter thaw
And calm perfection suffer human doom,
The humble instrument of natural law
Who signed these warrants in time's tropic womb.

Into that silence pours the loosening wind,
Fancy, the pollen-bearer, ravaging flowers,
And musical with meanings for the mind
Grown wise in solitudes and virgin hours.

From ice the budding woods rise up like mists,
The leaping streams sparkle like silver lambs,
And in the jewel sky the cloud-root twists
That soon all heaven with massy foliage crams.

The herald birds trumpet the end's approach
And all the landscape melts into the Sun.
Good people, let my fate be your reproach,
Swamped in the ruin I'd not willed begun.

LUXURY

The long, sleek cars rasp softly on the curb
And twittering women rise from cushioned nests,
Flamingo-tall, whose rosy legs disturb
The mirror-surface where creation rests.

Aconite, Opium, Mandragora, Girl!
Essential phials' exquisite array!
Poisons whose frail consumptive fervours whirl
The stony city to a fierce decay.

The churches' sun-dried clay crumbles at last,
The Courts of Justice whither like a stink
And honourable statues melt as fast
As breakfast garbage down the kitchen sink.

Commercial palaces, hotels de luxe
And Banks in long immutable ravines,
Life's skeleton unfleshed by cynic rooks,
Remain to tell the faithful what it means.

The shady universe, once haunt of play,
In leafless winter bares its ways of stone,
The paths we shared, the mounds on which we lay
Were ruled by time and lifted by old bone.

Time has no pity for this world of graves
Nor for its dead decked out in feathery shrouds;
This ghoul must perish with the flesh he craves
When stars' hoarse bells of doom toll in the clouds.

EDGELL RICKWORD.

CREATURES OF HABIT AND CREATURES OF CHANGE

I. THE NOT-SELF OF COMMUNISM.

(1) Communism is ostensibly the great modern religion of the Not-Self, in succession to Christianity. It is in that capacity that it is being considered here. The magical element of supernatural showmanship and theurgic artifice is supplied by science. And science in the course of this association is becoming recognized to-day as a part of this great political or religious machinery. In the following pages some aspects of this system are considered, especially with regard to its effects in countries in the throes of conversion, and as yet still impregnated with and confused by the decaying liberalist ideology.

The Not-Self for Communism is not Any-Self that is not You. It is an abstraction, made on a pessimistic model, whose suffering presence will not allow you to rest; whose misfortune is so great that however much you are called upon to suffer yourself, what happens to you will seem only an act of companionship for the outcast *alter ego*. You have no right to yourself. You may seem to be able to abstract yourself from the whole, and to cut yourself off from the Not-Self. But that is an illusion. So, whatever way you may look at it,—and the approved way is the "mathematical," the "scientific," way—it is best to give up trying to be a Self that does not exist, in favour of a "Not-Self" that does. What you are NOT, at all events, is God. Your self is itself a negation.

As an emotional reflection from the intellect, or an emotional or mythical version of its speculative zeal, religions must be regarded. And the religion of communism owes more than most, it is likely, to stimulation from the intellect. This may be the reason why it starts on such bad terms with the Intelligence and all its works. It has leant too much on this great non-emotional force, and learnt too much from it, not to fear it. If communism must be regarded as a great religion—such figures as Proudhon, Péguy, or Sorel as great preachers (and people brought into contact with the heroes of revolutionary thought with their fiery odium theologicum have generally seized the religious analogy) then it must also be seen to be, at the start, more a schoolmasters' religion than anything else; that of a kind of illuminated martinet, formidably wedded to a feminist matron (class-war and sex-war interlocking) both heavily sexed on a pedagogic freudian pattern, and also insanely righteous.

In the form of communism, or fascism, this religion is certain to succeed in the sense that in the immediate future it is certain to overthrow that "ancient system of the aryan world," which is Maines' definition of "civilization." It is also certain to become a universal religion of sorts. These characteristics of its start will no doubt give place to a more noble and prepossessing imagery: since in William Blake's language "The rat, the mouse, the fox, the rabbit watch the roots": the more magnificent quadrupeds enjoy the *fruits*. Revolution is still to some extent subterranean; hence we live, as yet, somewhat in a world of rats and foxes. Lenin was, however, a Lion, and consequently a portion of eternity too great for the eye of man to measure.

All the contemporary revolutionary ferment, then, can be shown to come from the head rather than elsewhere. It thinks, and then afterwards translates thought into feeling. A great deal of its extravagance and unreality on the emotional plane is in consequence of this. Because it is *a translation* always, from the idiom of the mind into the idiom of the emotions. It is forced for religious purposes to play a part too much. To be persuasive on the emotional plane is often an effort for it, and so it becomes too transparently histrionic. And it is again because it is so "intellectual" that in its emotional rôle it has to repudiate the intellect so much. Its intellectuality is in its favour, no doubt; but a good deal of confusion is due to the labour of transposing the things of the Intelligence into the things of very crude rigescent emotion.

(2) To be fond of change is the characteristic of the aristocrat or the wealthy class. And all social unrest has usually come from the head or top of the social scale. The Byrons, Tolstois, Bakunins, Kropotkins, are not noble for nothing. That fact has, after all, its significance.

The people who believe in "class," nobility, etc., are also precisely the People. It is the typical middle-class german schoolmaster, like Nietzsche, who enjoys an over-powering sense of elation in the presence of "a nobleman". The nobleman himself, understanding the tricks of the trade, well acquainted with its cynical secrets, to its manners born, does not manage to be impressed so easily with himself as does Nietzsche and his kind. He regards Nietzsche as a highly intellectual upper-servant, charged to the brim with the peculiar snobbish intoxication of the flunkey, and therefore as a very useful person. In this way the prussian or british Don stands at the head of the liveried servants, the academic gown being, as it were, the uniform of a warrant officer, the only member of the rank and file allowed to wear a sword while taking a walk with his family.

This situation is well expressed in Strindberg's play "Mademoiselle Julie." It is the instinct of the noble to throw himself down, and of the servant to push himself up. In order to test the truth of this picture you only have to try and imagine Count Tolstoi, Prince Kropotkin, or Lord Byron launching book after book in frenzied praise of aristocracy. It is not easy to imagine this, you will at once find. Revolutionary idealism came as naturally to them as Hochs! for the Lord of the Manor, and God keep his Lordship! arose from the lips of Nietzsche, hat in hand before the abstraction of the Junker caste, and the "ideal of aristocracy."

When, however, the aristocrat has brains as well as social position, as is the case with the Byrons and Tolstois, his love of change assumes heroic proportions. He inevitably becomes a revolutionary. But all revolutionary impulse comes in the first place from the intellect—that is its foyer. The social opportunity of the wealthy and educated makes them the earliest revolutionaries, merely, the first affected. They are socially nearer the spring of all change, or "progress". The majority of people are not only very conservative, but too far removed from the centre to do anything but move very slowly, except when violently exploded.

(3) It is easy to-day to trace the passing of science and art over into the service of religion—in this instance, into the

religion of communism. The younger sciences are even born in it. The "scientific temper", and attitude to life, that of scepticism and the open mind, are not now characteristic of the man of science or the artist.

We shall shortly be describing (in the Dithyrambic Spectator) that situation in the arts created by the triumph of communism. Communism is the influence that, entering the theatre, causes the spectators to swarm on to the stage and all become actors. It is the sanction and suggestion behind all that group of impulses which forbid the individual to be represented, or discourage his representation, but exact a group or a *class* image, a type or abstraction in place of the concrete pagan form.

The attitude to commerce is one of the great innovations of the communist régime, or of the last fifty years of revolutionary activity in Europe. This novel attitude to soap and boot-polish was denounced by Fourier, the great primitive communist, with a wealth of invective. He was on the side of art and humanism as against soap and boot-polish. His invective is a hundred years old and had as little effect, naturally, as though he had merely blown his nose instead. But the triumph of commercialism has brought with it much not dreamed of in Fourier's communism.

To look down on "trade" or sniff at commerce has in all times been the natural behaviour of the aristocrat, whose backgrounds have usually been those of War and the Chase. And what certainly has always been "run" against trade is *art,* and the things of the Intellect; those things which contributed to the indoor pastime of the aristocrat. But the ruling class to-day is a class of enriched traders and bankers. In the democratic western countries this class has been up till now forced to mask its power and adopt outwardly "revolutionary" principles. It has not been able to become a class of open Magnificos. One of the strange results of this is that this class has made a little revolutionary evangile all to itself. But although it decries, in its Press, excessive individual wealth, in the nature of things, and as is right and proper, it has much more fun and experiences much more personal satisfaction in other lines of pseudo-revolutionary propaganda. The trader has scores to pay off, just as much as the poor man has, only they are different ones. The old time traditional "swank" of art and the invidious comparisons so often made between that "high-brow" activity and the sordid pursuits of the trader, is not forgotten.

So the restless proselytizing spirit of the new religion whispers in the ear of the millionaire :—

"With all your power and wealth, you are still regarded only as a money-making machine, a merchant, a profiteer; your 'brains', as they are called, are what you are respected a little for, but they are only sausage-machine brains or boot-polish brains. The man who is really your rival is not another example of commodity-brains, but the 'brainy' man, the 'high-brow'. The point of him, too, is his 'brains.' But whereas your 'brains' handle nothing but bars of soap, artificial silk blouses, metal polish and glazes for tiles; his,—the artist, the 'highbrow', the 'intellectual', his 'brains' are handling and weighing habitually the choicest and loftiest spiritual materials (or materials that are popularly, wrongly, accepted as such). In wealth he is nothing to you : but in brain-prestige, intellectual 'swank', etc., you cut a contemptible figure beside him. But what is this 'artist', this intellectual, anyway?"

And then it whispers again :—

"You are an 'intellectual' too ! Is it sure that your brains are only boot-polish or beetroot-sugar brains? You too, in your way are an 'intellectual'—only being a splendid fellow, a public-spirited fellow, a fellow whose heart bleeds for the needs of his brother fellows, *you* have probably disdained to deal in these luxurious, super-refined, aristocratic, reactionary, non-material objects of what is called, if you please, 'Creative Thought'. You are democratic, you hate 'swank'; and you want to be useful. *You* dealt in consequence in soap and boot-polish.—And God, who loves the Just, rewarded you with that fabulous wealth which is the sign, as it were, that he has put on you, to show you to be His. *But why not try your hand at the other, so-called higher, 'brainyness', for a change?* You could write just as good a story as Conrad, Proust or Arlen if you wanted to. If you just put down your experiences :—you have had experiences ! You have lived.—Why, you'd knock all the scribblers into a cocked hat or the middle of next week ! Painting and sculpture present a few initial difficulties; but this is rather a convenient age from that point of view. For smudge and daub as you would, you could scarcely do anything more 'amateurish' and incompetent than that fellow Matisse, and a score of other celebrated charlatans. So next time, instead of being a *bonne poire* and buying a half-dozen daubs to put on your millionaire walls, just do one or two yourself!"

Accordingly that rigid demarcation that has existed up till now between the "brains" brought to bear on the manufacture and sale of soap and boot-polish, and the "brains" trained to "de hautes études", is disintegrated and broken down; with the result that the artist to-day, if casually met, causes you some uncertainty as to whether you are in the presence of a millionaire or a landscape painter, a novelist or the conductor of an orchestra. On the other hand, casually meeting the millionaire, you cannot be sure that you are not merely in the presence of a miniaturist.

The communist religion effects this strange transformation—(in countries where the communist religion is penetrating amongst institutions still democratic) this mingling of Kinds. For it is not classes that it mixes—it rather separates them; it is kinds that it mixes, leaving the superficial wealth categories intact, or emphasizing them.

A religion, like any emotional force, takes its character from the material to its hand. Here it takes one form, there another. The form it takes in the modern world is a strange one, and very unlike its twin, primitive christianity.

One aspect of what communism in the West could be said to have become is an insurrection of the millionaire class against the "intellect" and all the *traditions of the life of the rich man,* (of *other* rich men and their traditions of course, in reality). It is as though the lombard bankers, the Popes, the Condottieri, Doges and Magnificos, had all risen in revolt against the artists, artisans, scholars, engineers, poets and architects who dominated their civilization with melting Venuses and overpowering Sybils and Prophets: as if they had produced themselves, and handed down to us, thousands of Mayfair novels, and thousands of water-colours and pastelles in imitation of Matisse or of their own three-year-old children. This is the real class-war. For, since the only thing that separates people fundamentally is their "brains" or intellects, characters and dispositions, not their pockets or public appointments, the natural, most fundamental, *class*-opposition must follow the lines of the most fundamental *class*. The *classes* opposed in this way are the Plain-men (whether millionaires or bus-drivers) and the Intellectuals. And in this sense (only) the millionaire is the true champion of the people. He robs and murders his fellow-Plain-man and Plain-woman; he thrusts him in millions into the shambles of war; he enslaves him in his factories. But *spiritually* he is his champion. He is everything the Plain-man would like to be *and nothing more,* strictly (spiritually) nothing more. It is this particular "nothing more", this spiritual modesty or poverty, that is the whole secret of his power: the congenial stratagem by which he secures his rule. He is the *conservative* element in humanity, *l'homme moyen sensuel,* the human animal who does not want to budge from the spot to which he has been pushed and driven by the urgent forces of evolution. And the revolutionary (the non-conservative speculative and adventurous) "intellectual" forms that naturally "upper-class", the embodiment of privilege (by divine, by natural, right) against whom the forces set in motion by the communist religion naturally bear. And at the head of the communist upheaval is the *millionaire*—admittedly, it is lucky, a terrible, costly, inhuman, despotic champion for any man ("plain" or otherwise) to have.

But, as we have said, this is not really a class opposition but an opposition of Kinds, or of one genus to another. It is almost a biologic confrontation. The optimism which is the expression merely of the life, youth, and energy of the inventive, speculative mind, is confronted with the pessimism and conservatism of the animal mind of the "sensual average". A despairing insurrectionary halt has been called, the ideology of "progress", imposed on the strenuous world, violently challenged; the rightness of the road thrown in doubt, the leadership disputed; a saturnalia proposed by the demagogic power. And with our eyes fixed on the overthrow of dynasties and governments, we have generally omitted to notice a more significant suppression of the type-mould, of the european intellectual currency: of the psychological type-moulds on which not only the order, but the existence, of the aryan world mentioned by Maine depended.

It is not my intention to go more deeply into this, or examine at close quarters the figures representing these interests and instincts in conflict. I have said enough for anyone with some understanding of the situation to go on, as much farther as he may require, as concretely as he finds it necessary, for the purposes of further definition. In this non-political, non-propagandist, treatise, I am strictly concerned, with the affairs of the intellect. I have set out to provide only the machinery that is necessary for such more specific researches.

That the only true *classes* (and in consequence the only true wars, if you believe in the virtues of the crudest animal combat) are biologic in character, and not classes based on wealth—on Brown inheriting or making in business half a million dollars and becoming a capitalist, gentleman, and the rest, who yesterday or a year ago was a poor man (though he remains in mentality, taste, ability, hereditary characteristics, the same Brown) is the important thing. The conflict between the stupid and intelligent is the only true one : between those who possess vitality and those who want to lie down, those who want to go forward and those who do not, and those who want to live and those who want to vegetate. All other conflicts are highly artificial, require a constant political or theologic manipulation and a whole gigantic sham structure of hypothesis and illusion to sustain them.

The social revolution is, to-day, in halves, as it were. One half presents itself as a heroic effort to renew society and put the relations of men to one another on a juster basis—not that of wealth and cunning, the glorification of the qualities of the card-sharper or business shark, but on that of the gentleman and individual of finer abilities and finer instincts. The other half (and that is especially to the fore in the semi-revolutionized western countries) is the exact opposite. It proceeds to the perpetuation, by means of an organization of unexampled power and ingenuity, of all the values of industrial life, as at first reacted to, resulting in a glorification of the mechanical. Its triumph would be that of the quantitative, the apotheosis of the foolishly vulgarly colossal, and of the instinct to fix and stabilize the rare free life in an unalterable mechanical mould.

II. PROGRESS AND VARIETY.

(1) The idea of Progress is what we are about to canvas :

and we will contrast it with its opposite, namely Change, in the mechanical sense, standardless Change, or, alternatively, Variety. In the last section we have spoken of the "creature of Change" and of the urge towards Change, identifying it with the creative instinct, and the impulse to organize the opportunities of life. But the Change we are considering here is Change for Change's sake, the sterile restlessness of fashion. Change of that description is actually the rival and substitute of the creative function. For when a creature is unable to ascend in the scale, it always remains to him to move horizontally : and he can always pretend, to himself or others, that this movement is the equal of the other, although evidently it requires an inferior expenditure of energy. Or of course he can move down towards the nadir, back towards the undifferentiated simplicity of his beginnings, and that is easier still.

In this investigation we shall find ourselves faced with one of the most imposing of those blind-sides which confront us on every hand to-day in the contemporary western consciousness. Confusion as to the mechanism of their future impairs, necessarily, people's will. They have never believed so much, and yet in a sense so little, in a possibility of progress as to-day. The war has confirmed their worst suspicions as to the fraudulent nature of the "progressive" claim. But the great social change in progress exacts from them a contradictory optimism.

It is in the *technique of advertisement* that the ideology of Progress originates. Politics has borrowed from Commerce the advertisers' psychology : and in many things the activities of the intellect are also moulded on the system of competitive industry.

Oiled and sugared, with its strident optimism, Big Business has long ago burst its way into the workshop of the student, fish-like eyes maddened with unheard of success protruding from his shining morning face, and striking the student on the back, has invited him to join in the public ecstasy of the World-Fair of Big Returns and Colossal Progress. Such a phenomenon as Marinetti and Futurism (usually confused in anglo-saxon countries with movements that are if anything the opposite to Futurism) was a hallucinated commercial traveller (high-brow department) for Big Business. With his *speed* propaganda, and his propaganda of the colossal, of blood and iron and the rest of the stock-in-trade of the Big Business Boojum, he should have given every satisfaction. But a significant thing has happened, and it is that that makes you think that the era of advertisement and competition may be drawing to a close. This supreme commercial traveller for Big Business (high-brow department) has lost his job: or at all events Big Business is no longer represented by him, or on that side indeed by anybody. Is it not possible that the moment may be approaching when *no further advertisement at all* will be required? Then no more jaded counter or workshop hacks will gaze at a huge sign commanding them to *Keep that school-girl complexion.* There will be nothing but a blank-wall.

The atmosphere of commercial boost and bang is not favourable for real progress. The competition of its imitative opposite is principally accountable for that. With the inventive man it is not so much a matter of bread-and-butter as of the difficulty of having effect given to his discoveries, and the imbecile or destructive uses to which, in the form of a cheaply "progressive" imitation, they are instantly put. The advertiser steps in: invention and inventor are advertised out of all resemblance to themselevs. And in the majority of cases the only contact for the creative intelligence is with the advertiser.

Stendhal said that genius, on landing on the shores of England, lost 50 per cent. of its value: (to this harsh judgment he added a compliment about the scenery of Kent). Whether that was true or not, it seems likely enough that the modern world (made in the image of Anglo-Saxony, as Marx foresaw) takes a toll of that sort everywhere of what is most precious to our race—the free inventiveness and speculative zeal of the few men destined by nature to do the thinking for the rest: who prefer on their side that it should be that way: "C'est que, comme l'a dit Mach, ces fous (des fous désintéressés qui sont morts pauvres, qui ne pensaient jamais a l'utile) ont économisé à leur successeurs la peine de penser." (*Science et Méthode. Poincaré.*)

The extremism, sensationalism and boastfulness of great scale advertisement is what we have to fix our attention on first, then, in connection with the notion of "progress." To hear the advertiser speaking of *anything* that he is selling you would get the impression that the mightiest inventions were, every morning, put in the shade by the articles pouring on to the market to the accompaniment of his colossal, empty and meaningless excitement. All "sense of proportion" is rapidly lost by the human average who submits in bewilderment to the menace of this insincere optimism.

Unmistakable instances of *progress* are easy to enumerate. Such instances as the invention of variables, the circulation of the blood, electro-magnetic theory, the hindu invention of the cypher, the revolutions in thought associated with the names of Archimedes, Aryabhata, Ptolemy, Newton, Faraday, are things that we can assume would not be disputed as examples of *progression.* But does that bastard, frantic, grimacing parody of greatness that we refer to as *progress* in our industrial society deserve acceptance on the same basis as these things? Are we not merely exploiting, and misusing, the inventiveness of these "fous désintéressés" in the way that Prof. Perry shows us the barbarians, Celts, Germans, Goths, and their descendants, spending what they had stolen from the civilizations they had attacked and destroyed? Is not our Democracy a barbarian who will soon have reached the end of his booty, and who (like a goose) has killed all the geese (or "fous désintéressés") who lay the golden eggs? Or if he has not killed them, has he preserved and maintained them with a view to future successful laying?

The work of the annalist Mentho was destroyed : what was lost has to be painfully picked out in the researches of the contemporary egyptologist. The point of knowledge to which the mediterranean world had reached, and which was obscured or destroyed by christianity, had to be worked up to all over again to some extent when a possibility of a secular civilization once more presented itself. Where is the *progress* in these results? Evidently as far as knowledge is concerned, if all progress must be knowledge, anything known to-day that was not known yesterday is progress, whether it is only imperfectly known to-day although perfectly known a year ago.

Seventeen centuries approximately separated Archimedes and Copernicus : but the discovery of the latter belonged to Archimedes, was destroyed by the men of the intervening eras under the influence of christian fanaticism. That *rediscovery* is an example of progress no doubt; but it is progress to a point already reached in the past, and a painful ascent from a protracted backsliding. Many things, especially in the arts, merit the name of *progress* largely on this principle.

There is no "progress" from Sophocles to Shakespeare: but there is "progress" from Gammer Gurton's Needle, for instance, to Shakespeare. But the moment you have stated the matter in that way you see that there is a factor quite independent of technical advance and verbal development: namely that in which Shakespeare is an advance, and would be a "progress," if you liked to put it so, from almost anybody else. There is clearly no "progress" between Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* and Dryden's *All for Love.* There is retrogression in every sense that is at all capital to the art of poetry. And indeed Dryden looked back on his predecessor as the hugest of a gigantic species no longer being produced by nature.

The fine arts, literature, all the arts of expression, however, offer the least hold of any human activity for a notion of absolute progress. That is as evident in painting as in writing. There is no possible "better" than the productions of the great periods of chinese art. All the idea of getting a definition of progress from the fine arts must then be abandoned.

On the other hand there is, the scale apart, some analogy between scientific "progress" exemplified by the alexandrian age, and that of Galileo, and the progress registered by european painting in the last 20 years. The great period of democratic prosperity in the Europe of the nineteenth century was a miniature Dark Ages for the fine arts. The sort of universal platitude and bad taste reached by the Salons, Royal Academies and so forth of the nineteenth century, as similarly the taste in literature and all the manipulations of the æsthetic sensibility, was a wholesale retrogression from the standards of the Renaissance. We now can see how every art and craft collapsed *pari passu* with the advances of industrial technique, and the substitution of machines for living things or the work of human hands. Yet through all those years of booming commercial optimism a parallel optimism reigned in the departments of art and literature. The nineteenth century European was assured in every decade that a notable *advance* had been made in painting, poetry, the drama.

You will perhaps object that the same thing is being repeated when it is said that the last 20 years has registered *an advance* on nineteenth century conceptions of art and artistic practice. But it is at least from a very different angle that we have approached it, and any optimism observable in our approach cannot be referred to the region of greasy "boost" associated in our mind with the plangent Big Business advert.

A painting by Picasso, Chirico, Derain, sculpture by Brancusi, for instance, is *better,* if for any reason, because, precisely, in the work of those artists, the "scientific" engouement of the Nineteenth Century has been cast out of their minds and practice altogether. It is a progress *backwards* (if science-for-science-sake is your criterion of progress) to the great, central, and stable canons of artistic expression, *away from* the atmospheric, impressionistic, molecular-pointilliste, vibratory-plein-air nineteenth century æsthetic. *Classicist* is the term commonly used to describe this *return* to the secular canons of art. But whatever you call it, its main features, where painting is concerned, is a turning the back on science in the popular sense. It is a notice-to-quit to the religious obsession of *fact* and *truth*. The eye is again adjusted to the fundamental, human, necessities. The suggestibility that led the eye to adapt itself to the fluctuations, meaningless for it, of scientific advance, is at an end. It is a simple *visual* intelligence that it operates. It has come back *outside* into the world of our eyes once more.

That statement does not entail indifference on the part of the painter to the contributions of science to intelligent life. Picasso, for instance, is a painter who has been extremely influenced by the conception of recent mathematical research. But as a painter he has understood, throughout, the specious nature of his function as a painter. The plastic and graphic arts are arts of *life* : and if the biologist is, as Poincaré says, more interested in the cell than in the whole organism, the astronomer in the mathematical point than in the world, the reverse is the case with the painter or sculptor. The morphology of the painter's or sculptor's art is absolute : it is not his concern to track back shapes to their abstract elements. He recombines the shapes his eye presents him with as they stand. The analytic methods of the characteristic enterprising painting of the nineteenth century was, as art, little better than the degenerate mass of salon commercialism by which it was surrounded : popular science and commerce there, too, went hand in hand. Its "naturalism" (that of "natural" science, of course) made it even a suitable associate for its still more debased contemporary.

The chief point that I am trying to establish here is, however, that what has been happening in art (and it could also for that matter be said in the latest science as well) is above all an effecting of a complete break with the superstitious, superficial, "scientific" conceptions of science of the last century. And where its particular function is concerned, it certainly could be said that in consequence it has become much more truly scientific.

From this rough and hasty statement it will be clear on which side the writer of this treatise finds himself in the struggle : on which side he considers freedom to lie. Butler wrote (in his Note Books, where he was describing the hierarchy of *habit*) :—

"No sooner do we think we have got a *bona fide* barrier than it breaks down. The divisions between varieties, species, genus, all gone ; between instinct and reason, gone ; between animals and plants, gone ; between man and the lower animals, gone ; so, ere long, the division between organic and inorganic will go and will take with it the division between mind and matter."

In social life to-day a similar overthrow of barriers is occurring ; and that between the executive and theoretic is one of the most notable eclipses of the oldest systematic convention. We have seen the ἐθονταί intoxicated with dogmas of action, swarming on to the stage, snatching the masks and robes from the actors and returning to the primitive conditions of the dithyrambic ecstasy. And on behalf of the multitude, the millionaire-class full of "revolutionary" zeal, bohemianize themselves with a proselytizing intolerance, attack paintings of themselves with knives and hatchets, and create a "War of the Books" for the deliverance of the intellectually "oppressed" millionaire class, and through them, their profaner brethren. (Oppression by a democratic "equal," it is understood, is not oppression : it is only oppression that takes with it *no* political or economic exploitation that is truly oppression). In the midst of this gigantic disturbance *standardization,* the fusion of existing human races and kinds, takes on the character of a holy war, a holy war of fusion. Any barrier—not only the barrier between an inferior and superior, but a barrier between species theoretically equal—between varieties, between a *different* and not a *higher* organism—is attacked.

But of all barriers the most obstinate is the barrier of selfhood, or personality. Apart from the great generalizations of groups and kinds, there is the difference existing between individual members of the same group or genus. And of course it is true that any difference of this sort—the different make-up of Brown and of Jones—tends to become, in the struggle for life, a qualitative value. So we arrive at the war on *the individual,* that most irreducible symbol of power or privilege or value; in whose instincts this idea of *value,* the hated *qualitative,* finds its ultimate refuge.

What was described above as "the hierarchy of habit" was Butler's conception of the sort of congealing of energy or "mind" into "matter," that produced a hierarchy of matter and mind. In his theory substance is regarded as as it were *frozen motion.* " — motion latent as motion becomes patent as substance" he says. Chairs and tables were once alive, and still are to some extent alive. It is on these lines that James and the american school of psychologists thought, and to-day some conception of this sort is very generally held. Bertrand Russell's *Analysis of Mind* follows that path.

How the hierarchy founded on this conception would be constructed would be in judging people according to the ratio of matter and habit on the one hand, or mind and consciousness on the other, in their composition. This would lead to a sort of aristocracy of life—the living (more or less) ruling the dead (more or less).

No consciousness no life, no life no consciousness, as Butler says. The creature of habit and convention, the unconscious man unable to think (to *think* being to *change*) must always, in the long run, be at the mercy of the creature of life and change.

But when we say *change,* and a creature of change or of life, we do not mean that the new equilibrium aimed at is at the same level as the one abandoned. Change, unless it is "a change for the better," would hardly be undertaken; when we see it undertaken, in the interests merely of *variety* (as is the case in the impulses of fashion) we regard it as a sign of limitation of energy, and scarcely rank it above the level of the dead and habitual.

Before proceeding to the further analysis of the relations of the intellect and of personality, I will examine at some length the idea of *Progress,* which has so much to do with all these questions.

(2) Progress (which is essentially a notion of a graduated ascent) and Variety or Change (which does not involve a modification of value, but only of position and of accent) are plainly opposite principles. The creative instinct and fashion are great antagonists. If you believe in Progress you *ipso facto* believe in a hierarchy of values, a better and a worse. For a dynamic conception of life the idea of a possibility of progress is necessary, but not a mechanical progress, or uninterrupted succession in time. The idea of an uninterrupted flow is fashions: but it is rather adopted or borrowed from its enemy, the principle of creation, by fashion, to give a snap and impetus to the changes that it rings. For all fashion has to pretend is to be an *improvement* on the last fashion. But the idea of one fashion being intrinsically *better* than another, and not merely *newer,* is an idea alien to fashion altogether. And when it says "better" it does not mean anything so fundamental as creation, with its values, means, when it uses that adjective; or as Leibniz, for instance, meant by his "best of all possible worlds." These latter "betters" would even smack of effort too much for fashion or have a look of ethics about them. At its most energetic it would insist on the *uniqueness* of the events encountered in its evolutionary succession, rather than on an ideal, graduated, relationship between them.

In an attempt to get our minds clearer on this matter (namely that of the reality of progress; and how the idea of progress is the rival and opposite of standardless change) it will be best to fix our minds on a spectacle with which we are all quite familiar. Let us take the spectacle of the alleged progress in social life from day to day, and decade to decade. And let us take sex as the most central and characteristic expression of it, the LIFE expression at its plainest. (This Belphégor could at least be the rebus of the Demolisher's and Excavator's trade).

Men and women seem to say to each other "What is the use of living if you do not improve on things? Just as you have to try to 'get on in the world' so the world has to be made to get on somehow in the universe. . ." The woman to-day says to herself "my mother was not so free as I should like to be. I shall be more free than my mother." Her daughter will be more "free" than she is, and so forth.

A constant source of simple-hearted amusement on the english stage or in the newspapers—a theme that is of the nature of an institution—is the bewilderment of the petrified parent at the dashing slang of the child; her hands in her pockets, for instance, the actress taking the juvenile lead will address her father as a Top or a Bean and the suffocating laughter of the house from roof to pit will ensue. The very orchestra will smile. For this theatre is full of children, young and old, involved in the vast Punchesque joke of the "young idea." The rougher life reflected on the music-hall has for generations existed on the latchkey of the bibulous hubby who has been "at the club." Its equivalent on the more respectable stage is the latch-key of the young lady of eighteen. Her utterance of certain blood-curdlingly up-to-date tags (such as a belief in the desirability of "probation marriages of one year" or "knowing your man before you take him for good," etc.—suggesting horrors of premature intimacy) are the stock-in-trade of those who cater for the widest english middle-class audience.

Here the "progress" implied is always a progress towards the shaking off of parental control or inherited religious compulsion; and a tremendously wise, cool, insouciant, slangy and rather wicked state of "modern" up-to-dateness, unshamed nakedness, sweet "scientific" reasonableness, removing all veils, fig-leaves and fusty obstructions, a weakest-go-to-the-wall, healthy, middle-class, animal Utopia, is predicted. The modernist mother, with a perhaps ungraceful shoppiness, introduces her child of eight or ten to the chamber of horrors of sex with both pride and delight. The fact that she *herself* is the chamber of horrors out of which they have popped adds a piquancy to the demonstration.

In most modern states I suppose that no philosopher would mind very much what the modernist illusion seized on; for he would see nothing that was worth preserving. There would equally seem nothing, in the doctrinaire material future most commonly envisaged, to encourage him to believe that on present lines it will be much better than the puritanic past. Bella Wilfer, in *Our Mutual FRIEND,* is very like the contemporary Punch young lady, or Mr. Haselden's "Miss" in the Mirror, for instance, he would say. That phase of life would seem to him permanent; and he would regard "progress" as a parlour-game occurring on that plane for ever.

A sense for a *better* and a *worse* is a thing that all people evidently do not possess. A more compact, and a less compact, a brighter and darker, they are conscious of; but they find it difficult to organize a standard based on their will, which is usually unequal to the task. If such a sense cannot be vindicated as picturesquely as Doctor Johnson's boot was able to vindicate the reality of a material world, at least no boot, for me, could make it realler. If I were able to strike the keys of a piano with art I could with my hands, then, however, do what Doctor Johnson did with his foot, and produce a less discordant sound. In playing a fugue of Bach's I should have found, I fancy, a more intelligent "refutation." I therefore am on the *progress* side in so far as I believe in an up and down. I believe in the standard, independently of what it measures, in short. But being aware of the personal nature of this sense, and the egotistic responsibility concealed in its belief, I realize perhaps too fully the delicate nature of my relation to Bach, and our respective transaction with matter.

(3) What sensation has the public, or what is its average sensation, that of a forward or a backward movement? I should think certainly at present that a powerful sensation of advance is felt by it. In its overcrowded life, coarsened, without realizing it, by the ever-cheapening taste around it, which sinks to adjust itself to the more wholesale conditions; yet provided with a constant series of life-size mechanical toys as the roman populace were with baths and circuses, the public believes firmly in progress. These mechanical toys are a better advertisement for "progress" as a matter of fact than a circus could be. Suppose the alpine towns of northern Italy in roman times could, by some mechanical device, have witnessed contests of tiny gladiators, in a toy circus fitted up in their house, by wireless three-dimensional cinematographic post or television, or by a process of mental broadcasting; how happy these distant citizens would have been, assured of the supremacy of the roman mind more than ever, and taking great delight in their toy. The absence of the blood and dust of the reality they would have put up with.

If indeed Mr. Citizen (as the newspaper facetiously nicknames him) were going backward, what would happen, would he become alarmed? It is unlikely, for the backward movement would in due course become second nature; as he returned, moving steadily backwards, he would be more convinced than ever that "advance" and "progress" were a "great" reality. But for that matter any relativist could then show him how THAT BACKWARD FEELING (like THAT KRUSCHEN FEELING) is the thing to have: whether your back or your front moves forward matters very little, provided you keep on the move, he would affirm: and in fact there is a considerable advantage in not seeing where you are going. And a man's back is, in any case, the most intelligent side of him, is it not? —and it is lucky and appropriate that it should at length have taken the lead.

To-day certainly the average father believes that his son, with his new wireless set, has novel opportunities; is cleverer, quicker, smarter than he was as a boy. He is often tongue-tied with shame and pride, in the presence of his child's new prowesses and peculiarities.

If a little popular handbook were compiled to enable the average citizen to discriminate between mechanical *change* and progress, he would no doubt be recommended to train himself to discriminate between the different varieties of change, or changes of variety. The masters of this great herd, or Public, the small exploiting opportunist minority "in the know," do not believe in progress, of course, quite so much as the mass of people do. They believe in Change (in the ordinary fashionable sense of there's nothing like a change) rather than Progress: a succession of states *differing* from each other in kind, but not in value. They consider, of course, that you wear a peplum one day, a short-waisted doublet and petticoat breeches the next, and plus-fours the next; that progress is a wheel that turns slower or quicker: that one thing is as good as another, except in special cases, as for instance where a cricketing shirt would not be a suitable garment for Greenland, but a fur-coat "better." Frith (to take an example from painting) they might say, is *as good as* Giotto: but he may be out of fashion, that is all, and Giotto may be in. Brangwyn is *as good as* Blake, or as Frith, or Giotto. The very expression *as good,* indeed, becomes an absurd one. The Giotto-folk (like the Beaker-folk) are not here to-day, but the Brangwyn-folk are. What is, is. Whatever at any given moment is on top, is the equal, for all anyone can show to the contrary, of anything else on top at some other time. If you asked the man I am indicating if there were any scale of values (absolute better or worse) among Giotto and his contemporaries, or Frith and his, or Brangwyn and his, he would hardly answer you, for he would regard the subject as deeply uninteresting.

If you are one of those who believe in a possibility of an absolute scale of values, a better or worse, then you may believe that sometimes society is perhaps for many decades, on a retrograde path, or partly so, or on a forward path: that *the standard* is "better," and measures out Giottos instead of Kirchners.

But whatever you believe, following the idea on the one hand, of a possibility of undiscriminated, standardless states—the theory of Change or Variety, as I have called it, is always mutually exclusive.

If we examine a few of the most popular objects of the belief in progress, it will be found on examination that they are not unassailable. Wireless, the most sensational feature of the progress of to-day, for instance, in many ways works out as an expedient to meet less favourable conditions, rather than as anything decisive. When an advance is only a compensation for some loss in the surroundings of the individuals effecting it, it cannot be called progress. It can only be that when the conditions remain unchanged. So if a violinist or a singer is performing at the Opera or in a Concert Hall, only a portion of the vast population of London can, however many nights this may continue, be present at the actual performance. The wireless makes up for this disability to some extent. But no one would pretend that the wireless installation provided as satisfactory a way of getting the music as being present in the hall or theatre. The newspapers may assert that this is so; but only because it is their policy to provide virtues for necessities and to advertize the sale of wireless sets.

This then is only "progress" in the sense that it is an invention, a new factor in life, *without which life* would have very much deteriorated from conditions when this particular invention was not necessary. Long distance speech is a different matter. But its progress-value is nil; for men's thoughts are not being made clearer, or more penetrating, by it, but only the signs whereby they express themselves transferred to a distance. Virtually to-day New York is no farther off than Leeds, but where is the advantage to you or to me? Vessels in distress benefit by wireless installation : but it also is destructively useful in war. Such inventions are no doubt necessary for our particular life to-day : but it does not follow that what made it necessary is a good thing or that the road that leads to US is the best road that evolution could have taken : that is, the road most conducive to happiness or a more harmonious life. Nothing in this profusion of progressive claims should be left unexamined.

I think we could at first agree that an example of absolute progress is to be found in comparing the ship in which we go to Australia to-day, and the ship in which Captain Cook or Tasman made that voyage. For the purposes of getting safely and expeditiously to the other side of the world there is no comparison between Captain Cook's bark, the Endeavour, and the ocean-liner of to-day.

On the other hand, the ocean-liner is fatally suited to our world, and the Endeavour was fatally suited to Captain Cook's. The New Holland that he saw was not the Australia that we should see. His stay in Otaheite, circumnavigation of New Zealand, or the twenty-three hours during which he struggled on the barrier-reef to save his ship, are adventures that could not happen to us and which have their value : for else why should you and I enjoy so much reading about them? Separated from us by a century and a half in time, they might well be separated by a million light years from us in space, for all we could reach them, if we wished. Captain Cook's ship was the *only* ship, with its 370 tons and relative clumsiness, with which that voyage could be undertaken—or at least, in a similar time it would be a similar ship, and not our ocean-liner. To deny very great advantages to Captain Cook because of what he did not possess (in the way of comfort, and sea-going efficiency) would be as absurd as to forget the many advantages that we on our side possess (and of course our other possibilities of adventure). But our advantages can be weighed against his with more appositeness than the ships' can : and the respective values of the ships are nothing to do with the values of these advantages, which are of a different order. You cannot isolate the ship from the crew, the voyage from its objects, or its accidents; and the value of these things (in terms of progress) is inside the heads of the people engaged in it sure enough; and not in statistics about the efficiency of their rifles or instruments of navigation.

So it is abstractions that we have been placing side by side: the little eighteenth century bark, and the twentieth century liner, are not in the same world; they cannot usefully be compared without abstracting them from their human realities. It is this abstraction of "things" from their human element or setting that characterizes all our ideology to-day.

In the same way, most of the inventions that are the most conspicuous examples of progress in science, and which are the most often quoted by its interested or undiscriminating devotees, only connote a progress on the same abstract plane. They are better machines or means-to-ends, but are not necessarily *better things,* which are the ends themselves. For their only ultimate value for us can be a human end. We are the standard or value makers. It does not follow that they are better because as pure machines they are.

To return to our ships, it would be the wrong way to regard the ship to think of it as an object designed mathematically to plough the expanse of the ocean, at a settled velocity. That it must be a vessel fit for distant navigation, or one sufficiently seaworthy not to instantly drown Captain Cook when he issues out of Plymouth Sound, goes without saying: else it would not be a ship at all, but a tub. On the other hand, (at that moment of time) its bottom must be soft enough to be gently ground by coral into a splinterless breach, as though "cut away by an instrument"; oakum, wool and the polypifers also have to come into play, the pumps must be right, and the men such as they were: all these factors are required. The Resolution must not open the northern point of Easter Island too quickly: it must not too quickly wear clear of the dangerous surf that enabled the observant "gentlemen" to detect how indifferent to their danger the islanders on board were.

It is its limitations, as it was Captain Cook's limitations, that produce for us the romance of life. And with romance we are surely safe, at least; for who would dare to deny that it is of the very essence of "Life," if not in its crudest, hotest, and most Bergsonian form?

One ship would really only be a "better ship" than another, if it took us to a lovelier or more exciting place than its rival did. And if the route were a delightful one, we should admonish, and not esteem it, for its officious or pretentious velocity.

III. THE GAME AND THE REALITY.

Mr. F. H. Bradley, among recent philosophers, has treated these subjects in a way that suggests his version for illustration. He has also dealt directly with the idea of Progress.

When he is discussing (*Appearance and Reality. CHAP. XXVI. The Absolute and its Appearances*) the borderland of metaphysics and science, he writes:

"Its (philosophy's) idea of evolution and progress in a word should not be temporal. And hence a conflict with the sciences upon any question of development or of order could not properly arise. "Higher" and "lower," terms which imply always a standard and end, would in philosophy be applied solely to designate rank. Progress for philosophy would never have any temporal sense . . . ."

As to the for him relative nature of Progress, he writes: "These (human histories) with their tale of progress or decline, are constructions starting from and based on some one given piece of finitude . . . the question whether the history of a man or a world is going forwards or back, does not belong to metaphysics. For nothing perfect, nothing genuinely real, can move. The Absolute has no seasons but all at once bears its leaves, fruit and blossoms. Like our globe it always, and never, has summer and winter."

This (the characteristic monistic position) Mr. Bradley thinks is likely to dishearten: though he says, it should not.

"For the improvement or decay of the universe seems nonsense, unmeaning or blasphemous. While, on the other hand, faith in the progress or persistence of those who inhabit our planet has nothing to do with metaphysics."

So long as you do not interfere with the Whole, in short, (Mr. Bradley's, as it was Spinoza's, god) you can rearrange in any order or relations you like some particular fragment, in series ascending or descending from Reality or Perfection, or lying abreast of it. You will feel, perhaps, that, stuck on this "given piece of finitude," you are being isolated too much. The awful, rather sacerdotal, seclusion of Perfection, you may also not agree to: and you may resolve at once to get more Reality into your life than Mr. Bradley is disposed to allow you. For the keeping of God and man apart (in the old way, in separate pens) the Devil is required, and his services are no longer available.

"We want, for our practice, of course, both a happening in time and a personal finitude. We require a capacity for becoming better, and, I suppose too, for becoming worse."

Or again:—

"The sphere of dead mechanism is set apart by an act of abstraction, and in that abstraction alone it essentially consists. And, on the other hand, pure spirit is not realized except in the Absolute. It can never appear as such, and with its full characteristics, in the scale of existence. Perfection and individuality belong only to that Whole in which all degrees alike are at once present and absorbed. This one Reality of existence can, as such, nowhere exist among phenomena. And it enters into, but is itself incapable of, evolution and progress."

How Reality (or God) can at the same time "nowhere exist among phenomena," and yet assist at evolution, and "enter into" progress, is not clear; as we are all in the same boat, we must either irretrievably compromise the Whole, under which circumstances there would be no further sense in referring to it as Perfection: or else that disposition of our minds to pick out the pure gold and isolate it (under the name of Reality or God) does not correspond to the truth of the Whole; and even our meanest imperfections are the advertisements, or necessary antagonists, sparring partners or what you like, of the divine principle, that keep it illustrious, bright-eyed, and fit. Mr. Bradley isolates a vast egg of pure gold. As this is the purest gold that it is possible to have, you cannot have anything more golden. Hence it is impossible for this Perfection to *progress*. Hence there is no progress for the Absolute. In an absolute sense we are all-in-one, summer and winter; leaves, fruit and blossom, altogether;

we cannot progress across the winter, from one summer to the next, because there is no *next* in reality, no temporal progression for the Absolute. We cannot move, triumphing over obstacles, from a bad to a better, because the BEST is already there, apart in the abstraction assigned to it in the nature of things. And when we say that we do, we mean that, isolating a fragment of the world, we are indulging in a sort of *game of growth.* The artificial conditions under which this interesting, and very intellectual, evolutionary game is played are such that, at a touch from the Absolute, it would vanish like Shakespeare's famous cloud-capped towers. And yet, if you are going to play this game, you must for some reason *play it fairly,* in the english and not the philosophic, sense; be very earnest about its artificial ordinances, and never *"go behind it"* and call in the chaotic god. Why you should "play the game" Mr. Bradley does not reveal, no doubt leaving that to your good feelings or good sense.

This game, with its shocks and successes, is, however, serious enough to us to make us write books about it, more than we do about chess or bridge, though often not very different. If we accept its contingent and cut off conditions, it can become as serious, indeed, as though it were real. But there will always be a type of player, and not the least interesting to the traditional spectator, who will appeal or connive with the vastness outside. He will try to get Perfection somehow into the game : or Reality, as Mr. Bradley calls it. A great power will suddenly seem to possess some Knight or Pawn, and the game, as a game, will cease. The little conventional carved figures, with their carefully evolved protoplasmic masks, are there just the same, subject to the same laws; but one of the figures is *alive.* It is what happened on our planet when *life* occurred, as that event presents itself to common-sense. The result from the academic point of view, or that of fair play, is disastrous. It is by such supreme *dishonesties* that we recognize the creative act. But the "act of abstraction" by which "dead mechanism is set apart"—more and more set apart, we have said—is what in the last section we illustrated.

According to this philosopher, then, a perfection exists which is unattainable in terrestrial life, but towards which a finite being can approach. This view he foresees may be disheartening. It would be if belief that a consummation were impossible in a partial existence disheartened you. It might annoy you: or you might say: *"a miss is as good as a mile*: since I can never be anything but a travesty of perfection, I shall disregard it in my personal finite life."

Certainly a "capacity for becoming better," rather wearily allowed, must seem a disheartening endowment. And certainly a whole that is perfect merely because it is the whole is not a very inspiring abstraction. There seems on the face of it little point in its being "perfect," either, at all. If it is the sum of all possible imperfections and perfections: or if it is an absolute perfection independent of phenomena (in order to retain its empty name) it has, as a bare statement, equally little meaning for us. On the other hand, we have direct experience here and now, of what we call perfections and imperfections. Through certain channels we seem in touch with Mr. Bradley's Reality, or our own God.

How can we with the active bias of our minds, unless we wish for death, find any meaning in this discreet Perfection? This lump of pure gold is a lump only; unless, like a cheese, we make it swarm with our improper thoughts. Just as gold is only valuable indirectly, because of its action on other things, and because of the uses to which it can be put: or as riches are meaningless in most cases, owing to the unintelligence and resourcelessness of their possessors: so Perfection by itself, as a crude uniform substance of a notion, is without significance.

The task of "reconciling metaphysical unity with phenomenal diversity" is, as William James says, the difficult business of all absolutist systems. James, in his war on the Absolute, joins forces with Bergson, and in his pluralistic programme makes, on the vivid, the too vivid, side, as foreshortened a picture as we get in the barren austerities of Spinoza or Bradley. The "reality" of James is the reality of the man-in-the-street, as Bergson's is the reality of the "fashionable hostess." The absolutist reality, on the other hand, is a theological conception as chilling as the neoclassicism of a painting by David.

To resume the tendencies indicated in these remarks; *perfection* is a thing of which I and you, each in our particular way, have had experience; more or less often, more or less consciously recognized. If you or I or Mr. Bradley imagine, in our search for an explanation of the world, a solid mass of unadulterated

Perfection (which we call God with Spinoza, or Reality with Mr. Bradley) how shall we *make* it, of what will it be composed? Certainly of that beauty, goodness, or other intense and exalted material of which we have had direct experience. For we have nothing else of which to make it.

But at what times and on what occasions have we become aware of this superfine something which we name Perfection (*completion* that is, consummation)? Whatever they are, it will be in the multiplication of these, or in the establishment of a world-system by which they may be rendered more accessible, that we shall seek for the meaning of our idea of "progress". But in this case the question arises whether the progress is merely quantitative; or whether Perfection itself will be pushed on, higher or further? Only if you decide against a static perfection, or if you consider our natures already in touch, in some way co-conscious, with the Absolute, must the metaphysical question enter into the notion of progress; although our daily reality always invades the domain of metaphysics.

We can agree that "the improvement or decay of the uniserve is nonsense". That we do not need in fact to concern ourselves with anything we have never *felt*: although we may speculate by analogy on the nature of our powers. A sense of perfection that has in some way reached us can be our only goal, as it can be the only substance of our God, when we come to carve one. A greater Perfection than a living experience that we elect as our highest mark seems to me successively to become *poorer* as it removes itself in an ideally "perfect" direction from our reality: in exactly the same way as Spinoza imagines, in the contrary direction, his God becoming less perfect as he clothes himself in "determinations." But this Perfection also, it is true, seems to have very little to do with the details of our existence.

The notion of "progress" involved in most political reforms resolves itself into the necessary and desirable bestowing of more, as much as physically possible, on the people who have nothing, or next to nothing: and placing some habitual check upon greed and violence. Making a virtue of necessity, it begins gilding the painful, practical, evolution with values and a coloration not appropriate to it. Also the very simple outline of primitive reform, with its freshness and idealism, becomes caked over with the practical crust of discussion and accommodation, as a religion does with worldly rivalries and ingenuities of the schools. Tolstoi or Gandhi are scandals, as the sudden resurrection of a patristic Father would be.

Social Revolution is the old (and it must be admitted ill-favoured) expedient. But politics has nothing to do with the idea of perfection. And you can interpret Progress either in terms of politics or of perfection. The politics of contemporary social revolution is the working out of a plan to bring a little "perfection" (which the rich or instructed at least have in every time been acquainted with) to everybody.

Thus it is a material adjustment that is in question, not a spiritual advance.

WYNDHAM LEWIS.

THE JOURNEY

Morning's immaculate, impatient fingers
Snatch up my mind's dark threads to weave webs,
Stronger than snares for unicorns or horses
Or the bright birds that follow the sun's chariot,
And touching my eyes draw me from sleep's sea
Where I was swayed by a deep fantastic tide.
Those hands hold me, delaying the imminent storm
That later will fling me, a vain but slack-thighed rider,
Into the saddle of impetuous waves
No longer tamed by the sombre horseman Sleep,
But threatening the abject dissolution of limbs
And mind's erosion, rotting in the sunlight.
That corpse confronts me; its empty eyes are mine
That once were worlds, till the wild maid Enactment
Disdaining the shipwrecked, venturesome Don Juan,
Turned stars to spawn, senses to fleshless fingers.
Such alchemy confutes Time's lazy motion
And Space grows thin and frail Atlantis spires
Branch into frosty damascene of nerves
And deep-sea music dies in tinkling bells.

IMAGE

Morning made promises only to be broken,
Their fine limbs twisted in the wheels of noon :
Afterwards night will shut me fast too soon
In sleep's close chamber where I shall not be woken
By such clear sounds as these which, mutely spoken,
Cry out from wind and sky and desolate sedge
To me alone upon the evening's edge,
That in this pool Time lies with his wing broken.

This boon caught and coffered in crystal death
Of mind's journey achieved by wingless feet,
Reveals the substance of frail, shadowy thoughts
And dreams reflected in true counterfeit,
Till Time's wing healed his angry flight distorts
This brief translucence of unreal death.

DOUGLAS GARMAN.

MR. HANDY'S WIFE

MR. John Handy had one real holiday a week. He always walked out on Saturday afternoons to visit his sister who lived at Maids Madder. Mr. Handy's sister was Mrs. Jane Pelly, and she was a widow. All the week Mr. Handy worked for Farmer Told in the Shelton fields, but on Saturdays, at one o'clock, Mr. Handy used to carry his fork, or his hook, home with him and hang up whichever he had used that morning upon its proper nail in his woodshed. Mr. Handy would then carefully clean his heavy work-day boots with a chip of wood, and once or twice in the winter he threw the little heap of mud, scraped from his boots, into the garden with his spade.

As soon as he had hung up his tools and scraped his boots if they were muddy, Mr. Handy would address himself to the cobwebs in the corner of his woodshed, and remark aloud as if it were the first time he had ever spoken to them—"I be going Madder way to visit sister."

After telling this to the cobwebs, Mr. Handy—a peaceful man of forty, with a look of trustfulness that matched his moustache—would give himself a shake, as though to shake off the serf and put on the freedman, step into his cottage parlour, and await his dinner. The distance from Mr. Handy's woodshed to his parlour was but two yards, but Mr. Handy would step these two yards in a slow and easy manner that showed the free-born Englishman, and inform his wife, as he had the cobwebs, that he was going to visit his sister.

During his dinner, Mr. Handy would look most admiringly at his wife, Winnie, and chew gratefully as though she were become a part of the cheese that he ate. Mrs. Handy knew, as every woman does, that she was being watched lovingly and her lips would look the redder, and the contour of her bosom, as his eyes followed her movements, became more and more rounded and womanly.

Winnie Handy used to lean over the table to take away the loaf of bread when he had cut what he wanted, so that he might have a nearer view of her comeliness, and Mr. Handy would take advantage of her nearness to look the more kindly at her. . . . .

It was the first Saturday in May. Mr. Handy's wife looked more blooming than ever, and had just leant over the table very near to Mr. Handy to take the bread away.

"I do most days," said Mr. Handy, leaning back in his chair and watching his wife, "see Thomas Pickup and Polly Dent when I walk to sister's." Mr. Handy gazed at his wife's apron and she blushed. "Thee's mother," said Mr. Handy, addressing his three children—all little girls, under ten, who had run into the room from the lane with their hands full of cowslips—"thee's mother be a woman. An' a woman that I do mind when I be out. Now look at she."

Winnie Handy was putting away the plates. Every movement that she made was a sure and evident indication that she knew how to enjoy and be enjoyed by a man.

"I do talk to Mr. Pickup about 'ee, Winnie," said Mr. Handy, "for, even when I be stepping on they little loose stones in road, I do mind 'ee."

"Thee don't tell too much about me, I do hope," said Winnie, laughing. "Thee don't tell none of they folk about . . . ."

"No, no," replied Mr. Handy, "they be secrets that a walking man don't never tell."

"And when thee be gone to sister's," said Mr. Handy's wife, turning to look out of the window, "I do put the children to bed and clean the room we do sleep in."

"But we baint asleep," said Bessy, the youngest of the children, "when our Daddy do come in."

"Oh, yes, 'ee be," said Mrs. Handy, bidding the children eat up their dinner.

Mr. Handy now busied himself in preparing for his departure. First, he took off his coat and shaved himself before a tiny glass, placed upon the window sill. After that was over and he had carefully wiped and put away his razor, he walked up the seven shaky steps to the bedroom and dressed himself in his Sunday clothes that his wife had laid ready for him.

Feeling himself so much the grander by the change, he stepped gently down the stairs, put on his Sunday boots, and took up his black, holiday walking-stick—a wedding present from his wife—and regarded it for a moment in silent pride. Having done all according to his Saturday custom, Mr. Handy said quietly, "I be going to sister's," and went by his wife who was washing the plates, and so out of the cottage door.

In the lane, beside the garden gate, Mr. Handy stopped. He had no need to hurry and he listened. The distant sound of a military band, from the camp that was about six miles away, came to him.

This sound gave no kind of information to Mr. Handy, other than that the wind was in the north, and so the afternoon was likely to be fine. It was only a habit of Mr. Handy's to wait for a moment beside his own gate before he ventured out into the lane. Perhaps he wished the little birds in the cottage hedge to admire the wonderful shine he had given to the boots that he always cleaned before he set out to work on Monday mornings.

While Mr. Handy yet looked back, Bessy ran out of the house and fled, as fast as she could go, round the little garden with her mother after her.

" 'Taint time to go to bed yet," Bessy called. "All 'tother children be out to play, and 'taint time to push we into bedroom."

Mr. Handy's wife now caught Bessy and stopped her from saying any more with a good shaking.

Mr. Handy smiled. He walked down the lane in his Saturday manner, continuing his way through Shelton village until he reached the cottage where Mr. Pickup lived. Had Mr. Handy not seen Mr. Pickup in his garden he would have only passed by, remarking to himself that "some folk baint always where they be expected"—but this time Mr. Handy had no need to say so, for Mr. Pickup was where he expected him to be—beside his garden wall.

Though Mr. Pickup was there there was something unusual about him. Mr. Pickup had his right arm in a sling. Mr. Handy hit a poppy bud that grew under the wall with his walking-stick.

"What 'ave 'ee been a'doing to thee's arm?" he inquired, regarding Mr. Pickup with a grave, though a holiday, interest.

" 'Twere done," replied Mr. Pickup, looking with extreme concern at his arm, "at Madder Inn when they soldiers were talking—and thee be going they Madder ways, too, by the look of 'ee."

Mr. Handy gazed up the road. Even with a bad arm, he supposed Mr. Pickup would speak as expected. Mr. Pickup softly drew nearer to the wall. Presently, he spoke.

"Thee've left something at home that be the best part of 'ee," said Mr. Pickup. "An' when thee two be together something do happen."

Mr. Handy opened his mouth widely, but he did not laugh.

"Winnie," he said, "be made different to I, and 'tis thik difference that do interest."

"Ah!" said Mr. Pickup. "Thee can be merry when church clock do strike."

Mr. Handy expected that to come and looked pleased.

"Thee do pass here most Saturdays," observed Mr. Pickup after a silence of five minutes, during which Mr. Handy employed his eyes in gazing at his friend's wounded arm. Mr. Pickup looked at his arm, too, as if that member, through its injury, had become an alien part of him that he was obliged to nurse through necessity.

"They soldiers don't fancy being called liars," Mr. Pickup said, nodding at his arm apologetically. "But who be 'ee a-going to see at Madder? There be Polly Dent who do live by the pond. Don't Winnie mind thee a-going they ways?"

"She do know," replied Mr. Handy, "that Polly don't earn no shilling from I in Grange meadow, for 'tis to sister's I do walk on Saturdays."

Mr. Pickup raised his bandaged arm and groaned.

"Soldiers be fighters, as well as liars," he said, mournfully.

Mr. Handy moved his feet; he changed his walking-stick from one hand to the other and began to walk. Mr. Pickup entered his cottage. He was going to tell his wife all that Mr. Handy had said.

The afternoon sun shone kindly. Even the air was visible—hot and simmering—over the meadows. The delicious odour of clover blossoms scented the air. But Mr. Handy cared for none of these things; he had only thoughts for his wife, Winnie. He had never spoken in a loving manner to any but she. When he was but a boy he had planted a willow twig in his father's garden upon the evening when, after an exciting chase, he had first kissed Winnie. He had watched the twig grow, and Winnie grew, too—and never in any Sunday walk with her had John Handy behaved unbecomingly.

"They naughty ways baint for we," he used to say, "for there be thee's wedding frock and the ring to talk of."

During the afternoon walk upon the wedding day Mr. Handy began to be a little freer in his manners, but Winnie resisted him.

"Oh, I baint Polly Dent," she said, "and thee had best wait till bedtime do come."

"I did only mistake the hour," replied Mr. Handy.

When the wedding night came, and afterwards, too, Mr. Handy could never admire his wife enough, and would bless himself that so many wonders that go to make a pretty woman were all his, and his alone, to do as he chose with.

"Ah!" he said, when he saw his first child nursed at the breast, "Thee's mother 'ave all that be proper to feed 'ee. . . ."

Mr. Handy walked along in the dust of the road. The sun shone upon him and a cuckoo flew lazily over him, perched in a tree, and began to call.

" 'Tis a bird," said Mr. Handy.

Mr. Handy always liked to mark the difference between this holiday walk and those other journeys that, in the way of his profession, he made to the fields. He would show himself this difference by stopping sometimes.

He stopped now beside a deep roadside pond, where a willow tree grew. A moorhen fed under the willow with its family of chicks.

"Birds!" said Mr. Handy.

But these birds were not all that Mr. Hardy saw in the pond, for the surface of the water was clear in the May sunshine, and John Handy saw himself reflected in it. After gazing at himself for a few moments, Mr. Handy remarked:

"They waters do know I for a married man."

To show the waters, perhaps, that he was careless and idle, as well as married, Mr. Handy dipped his stick into the pond in order to see if he could feel the bottom. He felt nothing, but in reaching down he nearly overbalanced and fell into the pond. He recovered himself instantly, but at the same moment looked round to see if anyone had noticed his foolishness. Polly Dent was just behind him. She had slipped out of her cottage without being heard.

"He! he! he!" sniggered Polly, "thee's Winnie baint done what she shouldn't to make 'ee try drown theeself? If that be what 'ave happened, 'tis best thee do come a little way wi' I into meadow."

Mr. Handy regarded Polly critically.

"I baint used to no scarecrows," he said. "What I do keep at home be a woman."

Polly would have replied angrily, only the north wind brought again the sound of the band from the camp.

"Ah!" she said, " 'tis time I do go and clean meself, for no soldiers be rude to a happy maid. . . ."

The people of Madder had grown used to seeing Mr. Handy walk that way upon a Saturday to his sister's cottage, that was near to the church. And so Mrs. Squibb merely remarked to her cat:

"John Handy be a little late to-day. 'Tis most likely 'e did meet someone down road."

Mr. Handy's sister had two Gods upon earth—her best chair and her strawberry bed. She had set times to do her housework and a set time to weed her strawberries, and when she had done she would regard both her Gods—after dusting the one and weeding the other—with an angry eye, and watch their behaviour. Mrs. Pelly was now in her garden, looking at the strawberries. She had found a snail in the bed and crushed it under her foot.

"They strawberries do grow," said Mr. Handy, "an' 'tis nice 'ee have 'em, sister, but all same I do know where a strawberry do bide that be always a ripe one."

"I suppose thee be come to Madder for a cup of tea," remarked Mrs. Pelly.

She wished her brother to stand there a little to be noticed in his Sunday clothes by any passer-by. She bent down and searched amongst the white flowers, and at last discovered another snail. Mr. Handy watched her with approval when she crushed the snail, and then followed her into the cottage, looking down at his boots.

Mr. Handy sat beside the table.

"Thee baint Winnie," he said.

"How be they children?" inquired Mrs. Pelly.

"Winnie were just a-catching one," replied Mr. Handy innocently, "as I did step into lane."

"She don't never put they toads to bed in the afternoon, do she?" asked Mrs. Pelly, snappishly.

"Oh! yes, she do," replied Mr. Handy. "She do put they into the little bedroom and then she do clear the big one."

Mrs. Pelly looked at her brother in horror.

"No woman ever cleans a bedroom on Saturday," she said, decidedly. "'Twas on Friday that God created great whales, and 'tis on a Friday that all good people do scrub bedrooms."

"God's ways baint Winnie's," replied Mr. Handy, with a knowing look.

Mr. Handy fumbled in his pocket, searching for something that had got into the lining of his trousers. At last he found what he sought and drew out a new shilling and showed it to his sister.

" 'Taint often that I do go home merry," he said, "and so I be going to spend thik at 'Soldier's Return'."

Mrs. Pelly looked surprised.

"Did Winnie give 'ee the shilling?" she asked.

" 'Tis to send I back to she, happy," said Mr. Handy.

Mrs. Pelly looked, with sudden horror, at her best chair. Every Saturday she used to carry this plush-covered chair upstairs, for fear her brother might sit upon it—for even his Sunday clothes were sometimes a little dusty. She now noticed that she had forgotten to move the chair.

Mr. Handy had finished his tea. His sister had given him a wooden chair to sit upon but he now rose and looked at the grander one.

"Oh!" said Mrs. Pelly, excitedly, "look out of window at they soldiers going by."

Mr. Handy took no notice and prepared to seat himself.

"The shilling," exclaimed Mrs. Pelly, "baint thee going to spend thik?" She took her brother's arm and drew him to the door.

" 'Tis most likely they soldiers will treat 'ee, too. They be going to public," she said.

Mr. Handy paused for a moment beside the strawberries.

" 'Tis a fruit," he said slowly, "that I do much admire."

As soon as he was safe out of her gate, Mrs. Pelly hurried into her cottage and knelt thankfully down beside her best chair.

Madder Hill now cast a shadow that covered a part of the road to the inn. In this shadow Mr. Squibb was standing, who informed Mr. Handy that he believed the weather would change.

"A cloud be come already," he said.

Mr. Handy entered the inn and asked for some drink. He sat near to the bar window, tasted his drink, and looked out into the lane. Mr. Squibb was still standing there, in the shadow of the hill, telling any who happened to pass him that the rain was coming.

Mr. Handy emptied his mug, asked to have it filled again, smiled, and said softly to himself:

"Sister didn't fancy I sitting on she's easy chair. 'Tis well Winnie baint so particular."

There were three soldiers drinking in the bar, but Mr. Handy did not heed them. Outside were the birds, foolish Mr. Squibb, and the pleasant fields of Madder. Mr. Handy felt the happiness of one who enjoys all that he needs. God who had made the great whales, as his sister had told him, on Friday, had also a little later made Winnie, whom Mr. Handy called in his heart not his wife alone but his home.

The beer warmed Mr. Handy. He already fancied himself going home to her. But he would purposely be a little later than usual in getting home, but, once there, he would take off his boots, open the stairway door and call out:

"There baint no woman in bed, be there? for someone be a-coming."

Mr. Handy finished his beer and now, for the first time since he had been at the inn, he looked at the soldiers and listened to what they were saying. There were three of them and they were talking about a woman.

One of the soldiers was a thick, sturdy man, with a broad back, who, being sat down, seemed to cover half a form. The other two were well-shaped men, strong and lusty, and they all had the same kind of boastful look and insolent manner. They were beginning to talk loudly, in the manner of soldiers, who like to shout and quarrel when they are drinking. The short one was the most angry because the others didn't believe what he said, when he told them that he knew the woman that they were speaking of as well as they.

"I've been with her a hundred times," he shouted with an oath, "and I know well enough what she wants when she unties her apron strings."

"Damn you, no! You've never been to her," said one of the others, angrily. "It's a hard place to find and we two have always kept the knowledge of her to ourselves."

Mr. Handy turned from the window. He listened attentively to what the soldiers were saying. He believed their quarrel would make a nice story to tell to Winnie when he reached home, for, though she was so well-behaved, she liked to hear a story now and again.

"We'll all go together," growled the angry soldier, "on next Saturday, for that's the only day she can have us. I've come from her now."

"Another b——— woman, but not her!" shouted the others.

"I tell you it's the same," the short one growled fiercely. "She has a birthmark—a ripe strawberry—upon her body."

Mr. Handy sprang up, he staggered, he uttered a great cry—"My wife. My wife!"—and fell in a heap upon the floor.

T. F. POWYS.

COMPLINE

(To Eve Galpin).

Aloof in god's neglected house
The holy resin of high boughs
Dripping on mossed mosaic wells
Merges with sobs of slow bells
Whose earnest tongues in shrouded air
Take gradual silver for their prayer
From stars reluctant and alone
As citizens in their webs of stone.
Sound melting sight, pavements and walls
Corrode, then float, and night's net hauls,
Flung from the pinnacle of sound,
Profoundly in the underground,
Scraping up vapours of old sins
Like a bold bitch at area-bins.
Livid bones ascend from drains,
The white corpuscles of sunk veins—
Too white, too light for thistledown—
Climbing the memory of the town
With blighting stillness past the moon.
A voice stops suddenly and too soon,
Shanghaied by fog. The lamps are late!
All quiet things are lying in wait.
Yet a mild shape that's veiled by day
Goes raving, stripped by dark's foul-play,
Haunting the stations of tall sense;
And weeps in waves such innocence
As every sparkling pole repeats.

Walking the plank of narrow silent streets
I met Mosca, friend of Love's,
Last happy dunce of light's submerged soft groves,
Where he doles out breath for wind, is warm
With a dappled sunray hopping on his arm.

Evening lifts him from those joys—
Sly succuba that bothers pubic boys —
And guides his large resistless head,
Wrapped in a full moon, frozen and bewildered
Throughout her stalagmitic house;
Then back by way of lapidary flowers
And swollen birds in wormwood trees —
His day's weak beverage drugged with fiery lees.
My memory and his ears bleed.
I feel some sympathy for him, indeed,
Whisked by a soaring nightmare
For such a journey through dæmonic air
Whose strangeness breeds the hot-cold worm.
Stopping stray clouds in alleys of a storm,
Socratic method, "Indolent beasts,"
He cries, "regale me a sixth sense at feasts
Ulterior and non-acid. Go,
Frivolous Ariels. Stay. What can I know?"
"Water and fire, my dread master.
Home-brews are happiest. Resolve against disaster
Three tongues of flame, a fountain's head,
Flayed noon, juice of a river boiled in bed. . ."
Sweet mockers of eyesight tumble overhead,
Conning their fate's slow shadow on the low clime.

Hugging the ashen grate
An Old Man falls through time,
Mumbling mad incantations
Against the boundless wind and slime.

Still true to this cold hearth
Whose spectral warmth is gone
The sun's satiric lava
Plashes and piles on the unswept stone.

Why are the others so still?
That hand lies dead on the chair;
And mine can stretch no farther
To test its blood in the strange air.

Shrivelled to sun's least motes,
With a furry flutter like moths
Ruffling the satin twilight
To find their coffins and cerecloths,

Fat mimes of far Endearments,
Starved out from swarming nest,
With pyramids and dirges
Arrange their ludicrous last rest.

From lily's white and tallness
Thought withers to sedge,
Selling its feudal turrets
For tolerance on the window-ledge,

Where the yawning petals of Fancy,
Domestic sluggards, curled
In long-lived aspidistras,
Reform the vegetable world
With stem-blent primary colours
Of hostile Seen and Done.

Sole green of our unsealed Eden,
Bloom, bloom in the twilight's icy sun!

A tardy audience for the new-dressed mimes.
The stage is set for darkness or that light
Whose dews, approaching from remote eclipses,
Shall rust our delicate instruments like ploughs.
Mother and god and girl, be with us yet,
State-endowed trinity! With shame, with laughter
Will you be paid? Embraces between thunder:
Sobbing I clutched at someone in a storm.
Which of you wears that recreant's latest nosegay?
—The womb has lost its salt. A brood of monsters
Betrays the code of travail. Sighing adrift
The unchilded Whale adopts the shallows, bequeathing
Her outraged oil to local creeks. Humbly
The globe arrives, with all its lilies spinning,

In a pit of echoes. Draped the remorseful engines.
Smoothing still-warm towns, their bells hardly composed,
Nothing orates by a rough cross of steeples.
We shall pass one another without greeting
Nor triumph in a guise unfair to breath
In a garden sprouting geysers, lavishly furrowed
For the quick gassy blossoms. Air raves faintly
And naïve verdure like a limping animal
Creeps to the solace of earth's stoic children
With nodding rocks, upright lagoons, strange faces,
Lakes of louder than pebble cadence, bleeding trees.
These masks flow molten. Now transfixed or streaming
The forms unnumbered foil decay, unleafing
Gladly like donors to the flaming wind's
Loose sepulchre with bodies hard as meteors,
Whilst elfin music from the peeling worm
Cuts the Last Trump in peal on peal that mingles
With a late churchbell crying away the evening
For a black morning and a blind survivor,
Posthumous action, on the level plain.

Enough! The household gods are back again:
Fairies wash up while Mercury points "Fine".
Rough Boreas, withdraw your threat of rain!
And, Jane, take in the laundry from the line!

Dad's in his chair, the kiddies all at play;
Mother unhooks, the skivvy scrapes the spuds.
Oh, don't you think that Christ would meet half-way
A cleaner Venus rising from the suds?

I thought I saw Her, scribbled with a price,
Sent spinning along the skein of Bond Street,
Endorsed and docketed by busy eyes
Of sandwich-men and gentlemen in heat.

Him She allures with soft vesperal strains
Who wrought from iron what she weaned, my soul.
His factory still belches in my veins,
But She sips smiling straight from the brain's bowl.

I was blown lightly from their tight embrace,
A shuddering crystal mimicking vast day,
Scorned by the sun and hidden from their face
Whose second vigour joins on my decay.

I walk the city's length beyond the lamps,
Smiling inimically at what I am,
Where mumbling crones and pavement-tapping tramps
Make my self-pity weep or conscience boast the blame,

And swallow-limber light-sprung-Columbine
Women in westering flocks whose wind-void eyes
Invite the dancer heavy-limbed in mine,
Are hoarded in those beds for harsh desires.

Lightly on leash Time trains their fatal leap :
Feet tick on the pavement, traffic chimes.
Their day's silk tangle breaks the loom of sleep
And ghostly linen's plumped with dawn betimes

Before the crowing milk—after first cares
And the cold bath that bids not fructify;
After the burgher's shave, before his heir's
Incestuous tableau curtains on his eye.

Morning, its quivering nostrils charged with slops,
Its cataract eyes with dust, its touch with rheum,
Heaves on a skyline of unshuttering shops
Or rockets up from subways with a boom.

Fate churns renewal for its own deft ends
With ineluctable blood by night; endues
The will with fancy to devise amends
For terms that any sunrise can refuse.

At the meridian of gloomy days
In halls where flaxen typists gleam like ghosts
Or frail phosphorescent Andromedas
Pining for heroes at their rocky posts,

Merchants unmindful send them tea and buns;
And, plundering, praise the homeland of rich bales
Where life's a pander flogging with sharp suns
Flora half-beast, wife-helot to the males.

Among the sunlight's broad impetuous men
And unclothed stone and steel devouring cold
I have disturbed, down some exfoliate den
A once-loved monster smothering in its mould.

Unfaithful misery meets her pride-in-pain
Whose leathery dugs I left for soul's white grail.
Chased from the jungle, shaking in the rain,
She nursed me whimpering on a hungry trail

Flanked by the base hyena and cynic fox
And leopard's luxury envying fleshless joy;
And, wearying, sped me on the road that mocks
The will it cannot sanction or destroy.

Now, hurrying backward across calling tombs
For revel in an old brute-sultry air,
I pause. Twilight has gassed me with soft bombs
And Night, advancing, fights a maniac there

Who, muttering as he strikes, laments to lose
His flesh, a milky tissue reared on breeze,
And without pride remorsefully re-woos
His unroped Reason bobbing between trees.

Our wants are willows grieving side by side
With Time's deep-leaning tower on life's bright river,
Whose roots are blind and branches clasp a bride
Dumb in the stifling silver of that mirror.

My thoughts besiege its banks, and there they lie,
Fainting in attitudes of glacial fern,
Content to fasten on their foe and die
True to the only magic they may learn,

Which is not foiled by the corroding flood
Untying their young tendrils from the tower.
Those will have swelled, when this confounds with mud
Its crystal currents at the crashing hour.

For, thus rebuffed by worldwide sightless day,
I plot my zenith on a closer chart
Wrought like the silkworm's, dressed against decay
With the invisible-ink and balm of Art.

Solidity's an image tender as rain,
And a vast Animal ungirths in space.
Deep in the listless catacombs of the brain
Syllables revive skeletons full-face

Flush on the highways of their startled ghoul.
They pass the crumbling guardians of wide gates,
Issuing in empty cities of misrule
Hard on the heels of their tyrannic fates.

Once in a dream of sunken sand-locked dreams
I saw my new-found father's trident brim
Craters of breath with irresistible streams
And hilly strangeness, bounded by the skin.

Livid as pulp the landscape slept below
When somewhere blood gave notice of returning,
And the face of Hecate and a girl I know
Beckoned me from a blaze of Chinese mourning.

He is our harvest-king of fruitful doom
And she the fresh first-offering in dim light.
He sows renewal round her tragic tomb
And I, expiring, consecrate the rite

On the ancient mound. Regardful of my end
I post with requiems from a ruining town,
And wondering watch, in twilight's deepest blend
Of Sorrow and Joy, their separate fanes go down.

BERTRAM HIGGINS.

THE MARKET PLACE AND THE CAVE*

Idola specus . . . . idola fori
—Bacon : *"Novum Organum."*

M. André Gide, in the dedication of his new book, terms it his *premier roman,* and, looking at the long list of his works on the flyleaf, the reader observes that his previous attempts in this kind are classified under the titles : *récits* and *soties.* This, then, is something different. For a first novel it is an ambitious attempt—a large volume of 500 pages.

It is difficult to say what its subject is. Each chapter presents us, in succession, with a different group of characters and with different themes and threads of action, and the apparently unrelated groups are all ultimately related by events which are not so much a plot as a series of surprises. We have young Bernard Profitendieu, left alone in the house to study for his matriculation, discovering a bundle of letters in a locked drawer in his father's room, which reveal to him that M. Profitendieu is not his father at all. He decides to leave the house and that night sleeps with his friend, Olivier Molinier. Olivier has several subjects of conversation. For one thing, he is going to meet next day his uncle Edouard, the novelist, who is coming from England to Paris. And for another, he has overheard a dialogue on the landing in the dead of night between his brother Vincent and a woman who must be Vincent's mistress—and a mistress whom he is casting off. We are next introduced to Vincent, who has made a friend of the sinister Count Passavant, and is about to yield to the seductions of Lady Lilian, Passavant's mistress. Then we are with Edouard in the train from Dieppe and are admitted to the intimate pages of his journal. In this journal, of which we shall see a good deal as the novel advances, Edouard keeps a record of the events in which his relation to the other characters involves him, and his thoughts about the novel, based on these events, which he means to write, and which he decides to call "Les Faux-Monnayeurs." But at the moment, the principal fact which his journal discloses is that he is coming to Paris to assist the distressed Laura Douviers, the wife of Félix Douviers, who has been seduced and deserted by her lover.

Olivier is at the station, but Bernard is there too, an unseen watcher engaged in a vague bid for an independent existence,

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*"*Les Faux-Monnayeurs,*" *par André Gide* (*Nouvelle Revue Française,* 13 *frs.* 50).

"*Albertine Disparue,*" *par Marcel Proust* (*Nouvelle Revue Française, 2 vols.,* 18 *frs.*).

which, in the light of day and the absence of funds, seems a rather more desperate venture than he had contemplated. Edouard drops his left luggage ticket; Bernard, picking it up, recovers his bag, reads Edouard's journal, and, realizing that the distressed Laura is none other than Vincent's victim, boldly proceeds to call on her, and is engaged on an offer of assistance when Edouard arrives. The result of this encounter is that he becomes Edouard's secretary and all three disappear into Switzerland, while Olivier, who has meanwhile entered into relations with Passavant and who is later to enter into relations with Edouard, proceeds with Passavant to Corsica. Here M. Gide, having distributed his characters, pauses, and devotes a chapter to a discussion of them and a consideration of what he will do with them next; and we may pause too, only remarking that the intrigues we have recounted take up little more than half of the book and that the remainder contains as many more, with as many strategems of circumstance to unite them, and that in this hasty summary we have omitted all reference to the depravity of the youthful Georges Molinier, the strange inhabitants of the *pension* kept by the Protestant pastor Vedel, La Pérouse, the old broken-down musician, and his grandson Boris, and Strouvilhou and the coiners—for they are real and not symbolic coiners. But we have said enough to indicate that if M. Gide refuses to call his book a *sotie* or a *récit,* we must still hesitate to call it a novel. Its analogy as regards its construction is clearly with the fantasies of detective-fiction. "Les Faux-Monnayeurs" is, in short, like "Les Caves du Vatican" before it, a shocker for intellectuals. M. Gide is obviously not engaged on a representation of reality: the period of the action in this book, for example, is extremely uncertain. The account of the psycho-analytic treatment of young Boris by Sophroniska, the Polish lady-doctor, seems to place it in the present day, and in the opening pages a group of students are discussing, among other subjects, Charles Maurras. But later the sister of one of them, Sarah Vedel, a young girl, who has independent views, ideas about the equality of the sexes, and other attributes of modernity, goes to a literary party at which one of the lions is Alfred Jarry, and we recall that Jarry died long ago—to be exact, in 1906. And yet, further on, Edouard deplores that a certain gentleman's taste was not equal to appreciating the merits of a Montrachet 1904. As this wine must, one imagines, have been newly bottled at the time of the party, it is perhaps Edouard's palate that is at fault.

M. Gide, however, is subtle enough to have foreseen the kind of criticism of his novel which we have been making, and has put into Edouard's mouth, apropos of Edouard's novel, a statement which may be taken, if one wishes, as that of his own intentions, though as Edouard's novel (passages from which are quoted) turns out not to be M. Gide's novel, M. Gide is still able to parry further thrusts. Edouard's statement we shall glance at later, but, in the meantime, we may solve these perplexities by saying that in the present book M. Gide is engaged, as before, in making a construction by means of a kind of discussion with himself of the ideas of which the book is also the presentation. In his novel a statement of his intentions, a criticism of them, and their representation, are all equally and ingeniously combined. The reflection of the events of the novel in Edouard's journal, Edouard's further views on the relation of the events so represented to *his* novel, and M. Gide's representation of Edouard's views—by these devices M. Gide multiplies the mirrors which he holds up less to nature than to his own ideas of nature. For between M. Gide and his characters the umbilical cord has never been severed. They represent for him possibilities with which he has toyed, modes of action or existence with which his intellect has played, attitudes which have allured him. He watches them with an anxious interest and frequently interrupts their encounters with commentary. Lady Griffith becomes excited: "Elle . . . s'élanca joyeusement sur Robert, dont elle bourra le dos de coups de poings en sautant, dansant et courant (Lilian m'agace un peu lorsqu'elle fait ainsi l'enfant)." The old Count Passavant is dead: "dans une chambre du premier le vieux comte répose sur le lit mortuaire. . . . Precisément parce que nous ne devons plus le revoir je le contemple longuement." But, whatever M. Gide's apparent interest in his characters, they only exist for the ideas which they fulfil for him, and for this reason they are curiously unreal to us. They are never living enough for the reader to forget the printed page and merge his identity in theirs; they seem always to be conscious of the audience—an audience consisting of M. Gide in a self-critical capacity—and this gives to their doings a certain remoteness and to M. Gide's own transparent and flexible writing only too often the air of an extremely able piece of reporting. Morally, the characters in this book divide up into three classes, the *forts,* who have specific vices (notably sexual inversion), the *faibles,* who suffer from mental conflicts (Armand Vedel from a serious inferiority-complex, La Pérouse from suicidal mania, Boris from nervousness induced by onanism), and the *bourgeois*, who are simply *platement bourgeois.* Almost all the adolescents, of whom there are so many in this book, are vicious in some way. This preoccupation with vice and with the abnormal is, of course, a necessary consequence of M. Gide's method. It is not only that for a mind occupied with possibilities, the darkest and most curious possibilities, the possibilities that are farthest removed from the "normal", are the most attractive—since the "normal" is nothing but the neutral stuff a divergence from which constitutes the possibility. The reasons go somewhat deeper than this. M. Gide, as we have said, is not endeavouring to imitate reality, or even, to use a less question-begging phrase, to re-construct reality on another framework of reference. What he is really engaged with are ideas of relationships. The idea of a relationship which can be called a normal or ordinary relationship is of little interest, though the relationship itself, if it is rendered or given its peculiar individuality and completeness by the artist, may be of surpassing interest. Such a rendering is not M. Gide's aim—he is concerned with ideas of relationships, and after the reader has closed his book, it is the ideas of the relationships that remain with him. The characters do not live, the period, as we have said, is uncertain, the Swiss mountains are perfunctory white peaks, and the Paris, which seems to have a little more reality—that Paris of the Luxembourg Gardens, cheap hotels, plane-trees, dusty sunlight, Latin Quarter hats, and the odour of stale cigar-smoke—may very well be a sympathetic response of the reader's memory. But the ideas of the relationships are definite in our minds as they were in the author's. The writer of the ordinary shocker finds his material in what is curious or unusual in events, the writer of the intellectual shocker has to have recourse to what is curious and unusual in relationships; and to furnish out a cabinet of intellectual curiosities such as this of M. Gide's what we call for convenience the abnormal is absolutely necessary. It must be added that in this melodramatic kind M. Gide has some *trouvailles*—the curious behaviour and conversation—a kind of mutual exhibitionism—of the young people at the wedding party at the old pastor's house, the scene where Armand Vedel locks Bernard into Sarah's bedroom. These have strangeness, a horrible fascination, and a kind of power.

But it is time to turn our attention to Edouard and his views on the novel; as for any further account of the plot of this book, two remarks of his will dispense us from this task : "Mon roman n'a pas de sujet," and " 'Pourrait être continué' . . . c'est sur ces mots que je voudrais terminer mes 'Faux-Monnayeurs'."

"Je voudrais un roman," Edouard says, "qui serait à la fois aussi vrai, et aussi eloigné de la réalité, aussi particulier et aussi général à la fois, aussi humain et aussi fictif, qu' 'Athalie', que 'Tartuffe', ou que 'Cinna'." Remembering that the novel of which Edouard is speaking is "Les Faux-Monnayeurs," we may perhaps interpret the present book as M. Gide's attempt to supply this want of Edouard's—in which case we may suggest that it suffers from the defects commonly attributed to indirect wish-fulfilments. For though its assortment of fantasy and realism, subtleties of psychology and improbabilities of plot, are clearly related to Edouard's formula, the whole does not exist as a work of art. And the reason is probably to be found in the fact that Edouard (with M. Gide), as is evidenced by this very passage, starts from an entirely intellectual concept, is engaged in the endeavour to give artistic form to what exists in his mind first of all as a general notion, or ideas, the idea of the qualities and method which he would like his novel to have. It wants to concentrate on these until they are determined so finally that experience will proceed of itself and almost casually to fill the mould provided. One need hardly emphasize that this is the intellectual's and not the creator's view and that the writer who settles to the labour of secreting from the material of experience the stuff of a living art is engaged on infinitely more precise and particular problems. Edouard's notebook is filled with discussions and considerations of the idea of his novel instead of drafts for the actual work, and M. Gide, too, just as he is interested in the ideas of relationships, is more interested in the idea of his novel than in the novel itself. M. Gide's principal interest is ideas. "Les idées . . . les idées, je vous l'avoue, m'intéressent plus que les hommes; m'intéressent par dessus tout," says his spokesman, Edouard. We ought therefore to consider "Les Faux-Monnayeurs" principally with relation to its ideas, for it is full of ideas; all the characters, even, have ideas, just as Balzac's characters are all said to have genius. But the trouble about all these ideas, which are ultimately M. Gide's ideas, is that they are of a kind which seems to us not the most important kind of ideas; they proceed entirely from the intellect, and are not nourished from the profound sub-conscious sources that give ideas which are really important—the ideas of a Dostoevsky or a Nietzsche, for example—their mutual cohesion and their power. The ideas of these writers are part of their personality, as much *theirs* as the shape of their noses or the character of their handwriting. But M. Gide's ideas are something almost external to him, something that he is interested in, as Edouard says. His alert and subtle intellect plays with all the numerous and contradictory possibilities that present themselves to him, and what is personal to M. Gide is less the nature of these tendencies and currents of doctrine than his way of committing himself to all without finally committing himself to any. Some part of him always remains detached, an ironic spectator of these voyages of the mind, and it is curious to observe how this attitude characterizes both his method and his puppets: the introspection and self-mistrust of so many of the characters in this book is significant, and is very comparable with the continual glances with which M. Gide, standing aside, observes their actions. "Quoique je dise ou fasse, toujours une partie de moi reste en arrière, qui regarde l'autre se compromettre, qui l'observe, qui se fiche d'elle et la siffle, ou qui l'applaudit. Quand on est ainsi divisé, comment veux-tu qu'on soit sincère?" says Armand. M. Gide is continually divided. But in the result, his work, judged by the standards by which he would like it to be judged, and which are the only standards appropriate to a writer of his distinction, is not "situated"; it has no point of view, or rather it has too many points of view, and on too many subjects, and they are points of view and nothing more. We remain in the intellectual market-place, the *carrefour* of intersecting streets that lead in so many directions, a place frequented by the presence and the memory of distinguished strangers, a place of passage which offers no inducement to permanent residence, though it is interesting to stand for a moment and watch the busy streams of traffic. Let us turn from this contemplation and descend into the cave of Proust.

The projections of the outer world are unrolled upon these walls in a long procession of life-size frescoes, bright-coloured and curiously lit, in which certain favourite harmonies of forms occur again and again, and certain figures, their progress suspended, are held long and motionless under the strange light which plays upon them with effects reminiscent at once of the spectroscope and of X-rays. The lighting of this subterranean chamber is an astonishing invention. The work of Marcel Proust proceeds from a certain angle of vision—it is situated, in the sense in which we have used the term above. The latest addition to the long band of frescoes presents, perhaps, on the whole, somewhat less effectively, the figures which have been repeated before—a long analysis of the psychological processes by which the dead Albertine is kept alive in the memory by the torments of jealousy, becomes finally, when jealousy subsides, a subject of indifference, and in the last resort is forgotten; a brief sketch of a stay in Venice (which one cannot but imagine would have been developed at length if its author had lived), further studies of *le monde* with the return to the scene of a number of characters, Saint-Loup, Gilberte, and others, who have been excluded by the long account of the writer's relations with Albertine. There are again—as in the previous volumes—brusque changes and surprises in the plot—the marriage of Gilberte with Saint-Loup, the development by Saint-Loup of his uncle's vices, the metamorphosis of Legrandin into the Count of Méséglise. All the characteristics of the Proustian world are still present, though not now in such an opulent profusion, and the commentary with which their author guides the explorer in this vast labyrinth—commentary so different from the tentative view-points proffered by M. Gide—is as individual and as delicately elaborate as ever. Here is a typical passage—he has been recounting a family discussion of the news of the marriage of Saint-Loup and Gilberte: owing to their knowledge of the history and life of the people concerned, the narrator and his mother can see this event—which to others is merely one among the many events that go to compose the surface of the time—in relation to the past, and realize the curious ups and downs of fortune which it represents. This knowledge, he says, this family wisdom—"Cette sagesse-là n'est-elle pas inspirée par la Muse qu'il convient de méconnaitre le plus longtemps possible, si l'on veut garder quelque fraîcheur d'impressions et quelque vertu créatrice, mais que ceux-là même qui l'ont ignorée rencontrent au soir de leur vie dans la nef de la vieille église provinciale, à l'heure où, tout à coup, ils se sentent moins sensibles à la beauté éternelle exprimée par les sculptures de l'autel qu'à la conception des fortunes diverses qu'elles subirent, passant dans une illustre collection particulière, dans une chapelle, de là dans un musée, puis ayant fait retour à l'église, ou qu'à sentir, quand ils y foulent un pavé presque pensant, qu'il recouvre la dernière poussière d'Arnault ou de Pascal, ou tout simplement qu'à déchiffrer, imaginant, peut-être, l'image d'une fraîche paroissienne, sur la plaque de cuivre du prie-Dieu de bois, les noms des filles du hobereau ou du notable? La Muse qui a recueilli tout ce que les Muses plus hautes de la philosophie et de l'art ont rejété, tout ce qui n'est pas fondé en verité, tout ce qui n'est que contingent, mais révèle aussi d'autres lois, c'est l'Histoire."

The situation, the angle of vision, gives consistency and credibility to Proust's world, and gives him his indisputable title to be regarded as a creative artist. It is accompanied by very remarkable and diverse talents—a virtuosity in description which has achieved some magnificent set-pieces (unfortunately less frequent in this and the previous volume of the series, which are evidently only a first draft) and a power of manipulation of ideas, particularly ideas relating to the processes of sensation and thought, to which there is no exact parallel in literature. But the chief and final originality of Proust lies in his attitude or viewpoint, and it is this that is most worth examination.

The myth of Plato's cave is of singular appositeness in the case of Proust. His world is the world of his own sensations and ideas; reality, the external world, exists mainly as an excuse for his reactions to it. The outer world is like the notion of a first cause, a mere philosophic necessity for setting the world of sensations and ideas going. But since, after all, this outer world, however he would like to neglect it, does cause and colour the reactions, Proust's novel is a long record of disillusionments, disillusionments caused by the divergence between actuality and the images in the cave. As the novel advances, the disillusionments change from those which have a universal character, though recorded by a sensitiveness of exceptional quality, to those which are the specific products of Proust's own cast of mind. For all his metaphysical power, he does not group his disillusionments into a structure, a *Weltanschauung*—they give him no leverage on reality, only the certainty that reality is something which he can never seize and which will continue to provide further disillusionments. The account of his relations with Albertine in "La Prisonnière" is a nightmare of suspicious imaginings, in which what exists and what is merely invented by the mind have lost all possibility of ever being distinguished; he is wandering in a universe which is like nothing so much as a vast fog. And the abrupt surprises by which the narrative proceeds should be put down perhaps less to Proust's deliberate intention to retain the reader's interest than to his sense that, in the inexplicable convolutions of reality, anything and everything may be concealed, just as behind Albertine's most innocent words the most monstrous implications may lie hidden—implications that will always remain uncertainties, for whatever facts appear to establish them are themselves open to a similar analysis and to as innumerable interpretations in one sense and in another. In several passages in the present volumes this conception of the world is clearly stated. "Nous voyons, nous entendons, nous concevons le monde tout de travers." "Nous n'avons de l'univers que des visions informes, fragmentées, et que nous complétons par des associations d'idées arbitraires, créatrices de dangereuses suggestions." And again: "L'habitude de penser empêche parfois d'éprouver le réel, immunise contre lui, le fait paraître de la pensée encore." The universe of Proust's art is, in consequence, at once exquisitely definite in the parts and amorphous in its totality. His method has been compared to the slow-motion film, but a more accurate analogy would be an extension in space rather than a retardation in time. If we can imagine every item of experience extended illimitably, so as to offer enormous and diversified surfaces, surfaces so large that the notion of the whole which they form becomes inconceivable, we have a rough model of the world of Proust.

The question that one is obliged to raise (after admitting, as I think it must be admitted, that Proust is one of the first writers, and certainly the most remarkable sensibility, of our time) is whether a universe so completely unorientated can ever constitute something of permanent value to our generation. The question of the "value" of a work of literature is admittedly a difficult one, but if we allow, for instance, that for a modern mind Baudelaire is "valuable" and Hugo is not, and, to proceed to a closer distinction, that Rimbaud is "valuable" and Laforgue is not, we are entitled to inquire whether Proust is "valuable" in the same sense. There is no doubt of his achievement, but the triumph, in some sense, seems almost irrelevant to our aims. We doubt if it is any longer advisable, or even possible, to live in the cave, apart from the fact that it requires the possession of *rentes*. For at least a few readers, the creative writing which will be of final importance to our time must involve a more unyielding effort at comprehension, a closer and more agonizing grapple with an alien reality (and, it may be added, the statement or implication of a more definite morality) than can be discovered in all the ramifications of Proust's vast, subtle, and beautiful construction.

Samuel Hoare.

NOTES AND REVIEWS

It is difficult to discover how new books make their way in the world. One cannot accept the current superstition of the absolute efficacy of publicity. You can, of course, fake up a certain demand for any kind of book, but, unless the public really comes to buy it spontaneously, the margin of profits over costs will be very narrow, if there should be any at all. For this reason one need not lose one's equanimity at the sight of the literary pages of the middle-class Sunday papers. Their enormous mass of material prestige and their careful fostering of the mediocre do not really hinder the growth of living literature. Rather, they act as an enormous sewer which enables the indigestible refuse to be drained off into the ocean. They have even moments of enlightenment; indeed, their confusion of values could not be so complete if they had not. There is, I believe, a much less material way in which the few books that really matter get about. Though not so optimistic as to advocate absolute *laissez-faire* in the matter, or the review section in this paper would not exist, I think there must be private channels, psychological tracts, along which these books become known to the few who need them and who will respond to them. This primary audience is the only one that really matters to the writer.

* * *

In *The Art of Being Ruled* (Chatto and Windus, 18/-), Mr. Wyndham Lewis estimates the hypnotic power of the great organs of opinion to be all but irresistible. I think he overlooks a certain natural resistance in the ordinary person even in the matter of tobacco and tooth-paste. The real complaint is, as he states later, that in such trust-handled things there is actually no choice. Poetry is such an unprofitable commodity that the big interests have so far left us fairly free. The enthusiastic publisher who announced last week that Mr. —— was "steadily establishing himself as a great English poet" should take lessons in strategy from the big luxury trades.

The Art of Being Ruled is a work of such immediate concern and its train of thought derives from so many different manifestations of the contemporary mind that the attempt to appreciate it adequately must be deferred. Its theme may perhaps be stated not unfairly as *the problem of the existence of the individual in the modern world,* where his differentiation is tempted or threatened on all sides by the invitation or thrust to immersion. Is an individual existence possible even? Mr. Lewis concludes that, for the majority, it is not, that the conception of such a thing entails needless misery for the majority of mankind and incalculable irritation to the few who have the temperament and the stamina necessary to achieve it. Mr. Lewis's intellectual power sustains this position against a host of attitudes, unmasking their contradictions and following his argument through the intricacies of many political ideas. His method may seem digressive, but all the threads are necessary to complete the pattern, and these digressions are generally the sections most brightly coloured with rich vituperation. It requires a rare intelligence to be able to withdraw from events so near to us and to trace their anatomy with such perspicacity and humour. Mr. Lewis dissects callously because he is cutting up what is, practically, a corpse, but he has no wish to remain, with or without his readers, in the mortuary; he has too much to say to the future.

Some of the most acute analysis is in the sections round about the one called "Sub Persona Infantis," in which he traces the significance of the present diffusion of introversion. But Mr. Lewis will have to put out all his power of comic elaboration if he is to remain, in the delineation of absurdity, ahead of the life of actuality which rushes so fervidly to antedate his prognostications. Here is a paragraph from the section in question :

> "First, the *salon* (the home of the *précieuses ridicules*) will be pitched next door to the nursery ; then, gradually, the connecting door will become a large folding door ; and then at length all septum of any sort will disappear. The *précieuses ridicules,* dressed in baby frocks, will be on the floor with their dolls, or riding rocking-horses in Greek draperies."

In case I be accused of cooking evidence for Mr. Lewis, I give the exact reference to the following quotation ; it is taken from *The Story Teller* for March, 1926.

This popular magazine contains a "poem" by Mr. A. A. Milne, with the delicious title "Sneezles," and it is prefaced by an editorial note to put you in the right mood for appreciating it :

"Everyone who knows that charming collection of child verses, *When We Were Very Young,* will welcome this new piece which has been written for lucky Christopher Robin. These verses, the collected edition of which is a best-seller, take one joyfully back to the nursery, be the distance twenty years or ninety years." Unlucky Christopher Robin. I wonder how many times in the last twenty years the child's bookshelf has been raided by rapacious adults, set hungering by hoary literary critics for Stevenson, Barrie, De la Mare . . . but it would be tiresome to multiply instances when anyone may observe for himself.

* * *

The majority of men are obliged to pay some respect to the prestige of poetic literature, but the predominance of anthologies of lyrics shows that there is not much energy available for its appreciation. Mental development is generally complete with the arrival of sexual maturity, and, though the lyric may reach perfection at this stage, the really comprehensive poem cannot possibly do so. *Before* prestige gets to work you have the frank opinion of the ordinary, but in this case gifted, man: "The old blind poet hath published a tedious poem on the Fall of Man. If its length be not considered a merit, it hath no other."

Give me but what this ribbon bound,
Take all the rest the sun goes round,

is a bargain to which most people would gladly assent. Even the intellectuals are too tired, except for a little dalliance with some "charmingly ironic" trifle. Various literary gents instruct the readers of *Vogue* in the appreciation of the "intelligent" and "sophisticated" French romances of the eighteenth century, when life was lived very much as it is in Bloomsbury today. This is as it must be, and no one has any right to complain. The scarcity of adults simply results in a scarcity of adult literature.

* * *

The Times Literary Supplement for March 4th contains an admirable leading article in which, in a review of *The Oxford Book of English Prose,* the writer demonstrates the insipidity of the star-passage quoted from Mr. Lytton Strachey, contrasted with a passage from Mr. Joyce's *Ulysses.*

* * *

Some of our readers have complained of the conventionality of the verse which we publish, so we have procured at great expense a specimen of a more emancipated technique. If, as we hope, it pleases all tastes, we shall be happy to give the whole poem, of which the following is a part. The author prefixes a note.

" 'Mocking the God' is the first movement of an anthropological theme. By gibing at the tribal fetish, a certain people is afflicted with a long period of semi-darkness and incessant rain. The crops rot, the land becomes water-logged, and complete sterility ensues. This the author considers an adequate symbol of the state of the contemporary consciousness. He hopes to conclude with a description of the removal of the curse and the restoration of fertility, but he has as yet found no adequate symbol, except the Sir Percival of the Graal Legend, which is too romantic for his taste. The literary references are intended to enrich the texture of the verse with imagery, for invention risks being vulgar, and, besides the success of several very cultured poems has recently approved the innovation."

MOCKING THE GOD.

Out of a rusty sunrise the iron face of Sol, clang

Bang, as scheduled Greenwich time;
The iron face of Sol
Emerging rusty from night-deep ocean,
Sol The Deliverer,
Rhetorical, clanging Sol hoisted Sol himself out of his [solitude
Over the eastern hill,
His fingers cloud-white gripping cold peaks.
Vermeil-tinctured dawn
Came tripping down the spangled lawn.
"Back, back to your rusty duchy, feudal tin-ware!"
Elegant hyacinth light-plants sprackled.
"No delivery this morning, you theatrical survival,
Slick on the cue as a Lyceum hero."
O poor old man, poor good old man!
The tungsten tears matted the tawny beard.
Sol reels heavily homeward no more facing faithless,
Sharper than serpent's teeth,
Mis-begotten whoreson earth defilers kites.
O now is doomsday, now the shut of eve!
And the small rain comes down.

"Except one is beginning or finished and so able to begin at the end, there are so many things which finish at the beginning that the beginning begins to finish by being at the end. The finish of it will be that those and others will finish by beginning to begin again at the beginning which in the end will turn out to be nothing but the finish, which will begin by being the same as eternity which has no end or beginning, and finally finish by being the same as the rotation of the earth, when one will have finished by no longer distinguishing the beginning of the end from the end of the beginning; that which is the end of every beginning is equal to the beginning of every end, which is the final beginning of the infinite defined by the indefinite and disposes of the possibility of the existence of a continuation."

AN EARLY AMERICAN POET.

SELECTED POEMS OF CARL SANDBURG. Edited by Rebecca West. CAPE, 7/6.

Sandburg writes in his own way; you can tell a poem of his by the feel of it and that is more important than your liking or disliking it. Style is not everything the poet needs, but it is the first thing and a substantial beginning. Sandburg is the most obvious fact in the great literary Wish of the last decade—for real American poetry free from the traditions of what, for propaganda purposes, was called the English tradition, but which was really the mannerism of a small ungifted colonial clique. It is easy to understand the irritation of the younger intellectuals with the moribund New England reputations which gave them nothing which could possibly look like a foundation for a national poetry. Poe and Melville apart, as too wide-seeing for the moment, Whitman, with all his limitations, is the first milestone on the way out. But the road is longish and the Americans have been impatient. Possessing everything that Europe has in an abundance which has reduced large tracts of many otherwise agreeable cities to the level of entertainment-caterers for their garrisons of spoilt children, it has seemed to some of them that they ought to have already a poetry as distinct and superlative as their civilization is of its kind. They have wanted to have a distinctive poetry before they have existed as a distinct community long enough to absorb all their alien blood. For a poet has to be born into a language and a way of thinking that language. An immigrant Englishman would no more make an American writer than an immigrant Italian; our idioms are distinct, and it is through the realization of its idiomatic uniqueness that American literature is coming into existence.

In the early stages, a national literature is likely to be regional, impregnated with the tang of the speech among which the writer has grown. This is always a virtue, even in an era of metropolitanism, but, when a nation has only a second-hand literary language, it becomes of first importance. The exiled and vacationist Americans have, perhaps, from this point of view, retarded their country's emancipation; for they have drained it of a good deal of its talent, and an increased dexterity in the handling of ideas is not an efficient substitute for the writer's absorption in his environment.

Though it would be sentimental to advocate a return to regionalism at the present stage of English literature, such a condition is a sign of health in contemporary America. Localization is Sandburg's strength. As the middle-west, with its metropolis Chicago, is the materially dominant section of

America, it may well be that its idiom will be the determinant of the continental language. It has more vigour, if at present less delicacy, than the language of the rustic Frost and the urban Robinson, and it is incomparably more vital than the jejune nomenclature of the imagists.

Sandburg has succeeded in doing, within the limits of his personality, what has long been recognized as the thing that has to be done. He has accepted his environment as material for his poetry—the things that surround him for imagery and the names by which people call them for the texture of his verse. It is surprising how much rhythm he gets simply by accumulating naturally pointed speech units. He is not psalmodic as Whitman is, and in this he is an advance on Whitman, who, when he is not a jelly, tends to approach recognizable metrical units which do not derive anything from the rhythms of the vernacular. Sandburg's rhythm, though, is often not sufficiently emphasized, and some degree of formalism would seem to be needed.

Sandburg has been helped to do what he has done by a simplicity in his nature; he has found the marvellous in the growth of the middle-west. He can praise Chicago for being what it is:

> "Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of youth, half-naked, sweating, proud to be Hog Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player with Railroads, and Freight Handler to the Nation."

But this titanic happening is realized against the freize of events. Dead civilizations mock the blatancy of this fervour, or their case is simply stated:

> "A thousand red men cried and went away to new places for corn and women: a million white men came and put up skyscrapers, threw out rails and wires, feelers to the salt sea; now the smokestacks bite the skyline with stub teeth."

A strong sense of tonic values, a particular feeling for consonants (perhaps the Scandinavian blood counts here) helps to give cohesion to Sandburg's periods. And the Scandinavian nature-awe gives the needed reaction from constant optimism. Sometimes this racial tension, suddenly released in this region where it is no longer much needed, swings over to a sentimentalism which is definitely too sweet.

It is stated that Sandburg "expresses" the middle-west. Miss Rebecca West's preface does not tell us if the populace or any section of it appreciates the fact that it is being made articulate. They can have no excuse for refusing to popularize Sandburg—his vices and many virtues are equally of their sort. Perhaps they do, but we should like to know.

E. R.

FICTION.

THE GREAT GATSBY. By F. SCOTT FITZGERALD. CHATTO and WINDUS, 7/-.

This novel, the work of an American writer, is plainly, to the section of the contemporary mind which is gradually separating itself from the representatives of an effete sensibility, a significant achievement. It is a tragedy, not merely because the ending is in the police-court sense tragic, but because it is the outcome of the tragic impulse. The construction is organic; the story embodies the theme in such a way as to make it possible to say the story is the theme. There is no surplus either of unshaped material or of unused impulse. And this is true though there is no lack of stubbornness in the one or intensity in the other.

The significance of the hero's destruction resides entirely in the manner of its telling. The plot alone is meaningless, melodramatic; the characters do not exist apart from their relations to one another and their environment; and neither plot nor characters can be separated from the writing. Of the latter, however, a sample, showing the freshness of Mr. Fitzgerald's vision and its appropriate reflection in a personal sense of verbal values, can be given :—

"We walked through a high hallway into a bright rosy-coloured space, fragilely bound into the house by French windows at either end. The windows were ajar and gleaming white against the fresh grass outside that seemed to grow a little way into the house. A breeze blew through the room, blew curtains in at one end and out the other like pale flags, twisting them up toward the frosted wedding-cake of the ceiling, and then rippled over the wine-coloured rug, making a shadow on it as wind does on the sea."

THE PLUMED SERPENT. By D. H. LAWRENCE. SECKER, 7/6.

Mr. Lawrence, in this book, is ostensibly concerned to reveal a sense of the significance of life so profound and universal that only such comprehensive symbols of the divine in man as Gods are adequate to express it. His theme, also ostensibly, is of a nature so ineffable as to be expressible only in some form of art. Of the earnestness of Mr. Lawrence's intentions and the vigour, even violence, of his impulse (that at times compels him to break into verse), there can be no question; the seriousness and integrity of either are, however, another matter.

Mr. Lawrence's metaphysics, as such, need not detain us; that they are a sentimental vulgarization of the ordinary dualism of subject and object, togged up in the tawdry finery of emotive (often erotic) symbolism, it would be easy to show by a page or two of quotation. But such considerations follow, and are quite secondary to, literary assessment. The weakness of the book, that incidentally reveals the falseness of the metaphysics, lies in the fact that these metaphysics do not emerge from the relations of the characters; instead, they are imposed. And, though it would be wrong to say that those characters have not the novelistic equivalent of life, yet it is true that they do not exist wholly by virtue of that life. The motives of their creator were mixed; and in the development of their relations, the fervour of the missionary overcame the integrity of the artist.

Hence, there is a continuous falsification of reality. It is not so much that the situations, and their development in incident, are arbitrary as that the significance intended to be attached to them is altogether other than they will naturally bear. And in the interests of this significance, action is heavily overloaded with emotional generalities. Thus the attraction of Kate to the Indian, Don Cipriano, is not related as the simple affair it is, signifying whatever such affairs do. Kate is not only Kate; she typifies the European cult of the individual that Mr. Lawrence finds so petrifying. To Cipriano, a man, she may not yield; Love is too selfish. But, when he stands before her "flickering and flashing and strangely young, vulnerable, as young and boyish as a flame, she saw that when the fire came free in him, he would be like this always, flickering, flashing with a flame of virgin youth. Now, not will at all. Sensitive as a boy. And calling her only with his boyish flame. The living, flickering, fiery *Wish*. This was first. The *Will* she had seen was subsidiary and instrumental, the *Wish* in armour"; then, the affair having been made respectable by elevation to the heroic proportions of True Manhood and True Womanhood, she may reflect "He is of the Gods. And when he comes to me he lays his pure, quick flame to mine, and every time I am a young girl again, and every time he takes the flower of my virginity, and I his. It leaves me insouciant as a young girl."

That such writing is nauseating in the extreme would not matter, if the device of representing it as reported introspection were at all successful. The absence of detachment, however, destroys any pretensions to objectivity. The same tendency to distort the vision by false emphasis is evident in a descriptive passage such as this :—

"The driver whipped his mules, they rolled in the still, heavy morning light away down an uneven, cobbled road with holes in it, between walls with falling mortar and low, black adobe houses, in the peculiar *vacuous* depression of a helpless little Mexican town, towards the plaza. The strange emptiness, everything empty of life! . . . . The street was stony, uneven, vacuous, sterile. The stones seemed dead, the town seemed made of dead stone. The human life came with a slow, sterile unwillingness, in spite of the low-hung power of the sun."

Here, the insistence on the subjective epithets, the hypnotic drumming on the note of death and its harmonies betray the unauthenticity of the response. Contact with the things observed is not immediate, but dissipated and confused by the echoing, emotive overtones. The necessity for constant interpretation of this sort suggests that the experience to be conveyed had not its roots in actuality, that Mr. Lawrence's hortatory remarks owe much of their fervour to their being primarily addressed to himself.

How unnecessary this charlatanism really is can be seen in the isolated passages in which Mr. Lawrence confines himself to the setting down of events for their own sake. Such scenes, to name two only, as the attack on the hacienda and the burning of the images are very finely done. And in the mob-scenes, the pressure of the herd-emotions is conveyed with a power and conviction of which only Mr. Lawrence, among contemporaries, is capable. But, as he himself has said, "If you try to nail anything down in the novel, either it kills the novel, or the novel gets up and walks away with the nail." This novel is not wholly dead; rather, like the cow in the rhyme, it has left its tail behind it, very full of tacks.

THE BIRTH OF THE GODS. By DMITRI S. MEREZHKOVSKY. Translated by Natalie A. Duddington. DENT, 6/-.

M. Merezhkovsky has also recognized the Godhead in mortals. He is obligingly tidy and has confined the explicit statement of the "meaning" of his book to an introduction. This, however, which is rather the moral than the meaning, it is permissible to disregard for the moment; the test is not the rational formulation of the author's values, but their imaginative expression.

In this respect, tidiness is inadequate, particularly when it appears to spring from a poverty of impulse. The characters are credible, but dim; though they may have held and been moved by the ideas on God and the destiny of the soul attributed to them, they are not animated by them. And, consequently, the events, whose significance depends on their being the resolution of the situations set up by the conflict between circumstances and the divine principle in man, are unconvincing. That the divine principle in question is sadistic eroticism, apparently unrecognized as such by the author, is not of æsthetic importance; a motive is a motive, and its "value" depends wholly on the completeness and intensity with which it is realized.

It is here that M. Merezhkovsky has failed, but, obviously, the question of the quality of the writing enters largely into this failure. French versions of other works by this author are far more convincing, so that it is evident the translator is partly responsible for the extreme flatness of such scenes as, for instance, the sacred games.

LOLLY WILLOWES. By SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER. CHATTO and WINDUS, 7/-.

It is a pity Miss Warner did not confine herself to one convention throughout. As an essay in the comedy of manners, with the necessary complemental tragic implications, the first half of her novel is delightful; with the introduction of Satan, however, the key is altered to that of expressionistic fantasy. The result of this transposition of values is that the shape of the book is destroyed. There is no unity of impression; the significance of the first half is other than the significance of the second, though nominally the theme is the same.

Roughly, this theme is "Women have such vivid imaginations, and lead such dull lives." Lolly Willowes is a spinster who has spent the twenty years since her father's death in the household of a married sister. In this Forsytish family, she finds herself living for others who yet have no need of her. To escape all that—"to have a life of one's own, not an existence doled out to you by others, charitable refuse of their thoughts, so many ounces of stale bread of life doled out daily, the workhouse dietary is scientifically calculated to support life."—she goes off to a cottage of her own in a remote Buckinghamshire village. Hither she is followed by a favourite nephew. It is to rid herself of him, who robs her of peace, that Lolly enters into a compact with Satan. Immediately the nephew's milk curdles daily; he gashes his thumb on a condensed milk tin; innumerable frets harass him, but nothing unseats him until he becomes engaged to Pandora and departs with her to London. Then Lolly is left alone to be herself.

Now, whether Satan is responsible for these events or whether they occur in the course of nature is uncertain, they are so skilfully casual and commonplace. In either case, Lolly is saved by external agencies. The flaw is fundamental, for it is not the fact of Lolly's salvation that matters, but her manner of achieving it. That Miss Warner has not been loyal to her conception is a pity, for she has many fine qualities. Her nervous and exact English, her slyly satirical sense of character and ironical technique make it worth while hoping that she will soon add the one thing necessary—imaginative integrity.

C. H. Rickword.

THE CRIME AT VANDERLYNDEN'S. By R. H. MOTTRAM. CHATTO & WINDUS, 7/6.

Without being a remarkable writer, Mr. Mottram succeeds in spreading out the unctuous, grey fatality of the war over a narrative which, trivial in itself, as an obsession becomes symbolical. It is a combination of emotional honesty in the recording of particulars and a catching at a vision of the whole thing—for example, the fading away of the armies, the evaporation of the "fighting spirit," round about the time of the armistice—which distinguish Mr. Mottram's record and place it for the moment above the ephemeral products of the great debauch.

THE SACRED TREE. By LADY MURASAKI. Translated by Arthur Waley. ALLEN and UNWIN, 10/6.

This, the second volume of the *Tale of Genji,* is in every respect equal to the first. It is not Lady Murasaki's psychological insight that impresses so much as her selection and combination of incident and her expressive use of the ceremonial conventions of Japanese life of the period.

A MOMENT OF TIME. By RICHARD HUGHES. CHATTO and WINDUS, 7/-

We recommend Mr. Hughes to any of the indefatigable Americans who have analysed and codified all possible methods of short-story writing. As a text-book, this volume would serve admirably; every way of obtaining an effect can be demonstrated from it; and the final lesson of the ineffectiveness of virtuosity might not be wasted on the discerning.

INNOCENT BIRDS. By T. F. POWYS. CHATTO and WINDUS, 7/6.

This novel was received too late for full consideration, but it has been possible to see that it is the best work Mr. Powys has so far published. He is now more thoroughly master of his conventions; the consistency of his private universe is no longer in constant danger of destruction by intruding episodes of realism (which are not necessarily more real). It follows from the increased autonomy of his medium that his symbolical labourers and other figures are becoming a more and more exact reflection of his personal vision, in accordance with which the whole of the material is transposed where formerly only part was. Of the quality of this vision, discussion must be deferred.

CRITICISM AS "A CHARMING PARASITE."

AUTHORS DEAD AND LIVING. By F. L. LUCAS. CHATTO and WINDUS, 7/6.

Mr. Lucas prefaces his book with a shoddy sort of apology for the indeterminateness of his own criticism, summarizing the lack of agreement among Aristotle, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and others of his more ambitious predecessors. No doubt the pedantic don is a bore, but he is sometimes useful to lazier but more intelligent men; the same excuse cannot be made for the man of learning, who, with the affectation of familiarity, flatters the common audience by discrediting the apparatus of critical thought.

But for Mr. Lucas criticism is not an instrument; it is an entertainment, or, more precisely:

"Criticism then is a form of art which deals not primarily with life, but with other art—a charming parasite: it is a form of expression which allows us to overhear the introspection of an intelligent person into his own reactions in response to a work of art."

Mr. Lucas uses the shirt-sleeve style of the popular University lecturer, and the elaborate facetiousness that goes with it. "Second-best bedlamite lives of Shakespeare," and "a veritable somnambulance corps of poets" are, perhaps, no more than the penalty of forced picturesqueness; his fondness for the journalese of the higher journalism is constant, a permanent disability . . . "the calm, relentless, bitter logic, as of destiny itself" . . . "the feeling that for all the agony of transience, all the disillusion of hopes in vain fulfilled, there are no consolations, but the bitter beauty of the Universe and the frail human pride that confronts it for a moment undismayed." These clichés are staple matter of Mr. Lucas's introspection, with little regard for the particular poet who is under examination; calculation of the proportion of sibilants to open vowels would be as pertinent.

These big, noble, tragic emotions which Mr. Lucas paraphrases indefatigably, are for him the substance of poetry, and this fact gives his book an emotional, if not an intelligent, coherence. So the book might be called criticism even in our sense of the word, for he does, from that basis, generalize from his experience, though with results with which we generally disagree.

He has read widely, but not so profitably as if he had thought more. On the subject of the decline of poetry in the eighteenth century he drops this hint without picking it up again :

> "Hence Dryden's remark, amazing when one stops to think what it implies, that the composition of poetry is and ought to be of wit."

He does not tell us what he thought of it when he stopped to think, whether he was amazed at its profundity or stupidity; the fact that he stopped to think is left to our reverent contemplation. But surely Mr. Lucas, who must know the sense in which "wit" was used by Dryden and his contemporaries, saw the strength of the notion behind that thought. Again, he says, "Rosenberg's idea of poetry as an 'interesting complexity of thought', while it serves to describe some kinds of it, is a perilous guide for practice." So are all guides, for that matter. He misses the significant point, the parallelism with Dryden's remark and its peculiar relevance to the contemporary æsthetic of poetry.

"The Progress of Poetry" (bones of Swift) is a long, ambitious and fantastical attempt to bring modern poetry to its senses.

"In the tom-tom lying silent now, in some museum gallery the dreaming imagination may discern the cradle of Shakespeare. When some hairy object in a wilderness first found that making a regular series of noises somehow gave vent to something he felt. . . . " the flatulent anthropoid was no doubt a lineal ancestor of Shakespeare. "The mother of music came now into the voice of man as she had come, even then, thousands of centuries before, into the cry of the cuckoo amid the woods of a yet unhuman world.'' No matter that birds are a later development than man, ''Genesis'' is good enough for poets and literary critics. After a little anthropology, we reach solid ground and the threshold of history. ''Verse had at first been improvized—like those hoarse raven-croaks of sudden song uttered by the men of the Icelandic sagas, when their steel has bitten into the foemen's brain, or their foemen's steel to their own.''

So we have the familiar romantic view of the primitive, comparatively free and uncontrolled; ''but, as time goes on and men think more and act and feel less violently, some of the old giant vigour dies away.'' And, in the end, tradition becomes almost too much for the poets. A pretty picture, but from all we know of surviving poetry the early poets had to walk in very narrow conventional paths. We are much freer; in fact, at the present time we suffer from having no master-convention. When we get one, poetry will revive again. We agree with Mr. Lucas that this poetry will say very much the same things as the old. But, in order to say the same thing in a different environment, the way of saying it must be different.

His indictment of the younger poets is pointless because indiscriminate. If he objects to certain tendencies, he should have named the exponents of them instead of tarring everyone with the Dada brush. But at the end we do at least know what kind of emotions Mr. Lucas likes to imbibe with his poetry and this gives us the key to the wants of most readers, perhaps; they demand that poetry shall present them with a magnified replica of a nobly suffering self. Their optimistic protestations are faint, muffled by the presentiment that this sort of poetry cannot long survive the collapse of the egocentric universe. Hence their Canute-like attitude in face of the advancing tide, which they exhort by all the corpses in the Pantheon and Mr. Humbert Wolfe, to hold ''with a Roman strength'' to ''its sense of form and order, of unexpected beauty and sudden pity, of certain standards, mistaken it may be, but genuine, amid the chaos of the world.'' At which point, in a pious but precarious pose, half-threatening and half-propitiatory, Mr. Lucas leaves the reader to the mercy of the future and makes the best use of his heels, vanishing in a consolatory cloud.

EDGELL RICKWORD.

SELECT LETTERS OF JONATHAN SWIFT. Edited by W. D. Taylor. BOHN'S POPULAR LIBRARY, 2/-.

This is a very useful selection of Swift's letters, especially since it gives the entire interchange between Cadenus and Vanessa, but it shows a tendency, emphasized in the introduction, to scant two sides of his personality, the public and pessimistic, in order to stress the more popularly acceptable characteristics of geniality, clowning, and country-parsonality. Mr. Taylor seems to be a little timid of the power exercised by Swift and willingly helps the uneasy general reader to cold-shoulder the Yahoos. There is no reason to suppose Swift was "leaning on his elbow" when he wrote to Pope or his noble friends; the formality he there shows is no more self-conscious than Bolingbroke's in his long and intimate letters to the Dean, and on occasion the latter knew very well how to censure injustice or fickleness, whether a nobleman's or a servant's. There are letters to Archbishop King, to Lord Palmerston, and others, not printed here, which illustrate Swift's fierce and dignified anger, and the whole correspondence between him and Pope is remarkable for the sincerity with which their friendship is expressed.

THE PLAGUE PAMPHLETS OF THOMAS DEKKER. Edited by F. P. Wilson. OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 9/-.

Mr. Wilson has edited these six pamphlets with concision and scholarship, stating with authority his reasons for attributing to Dekker those not previously looked upon as his. *Newes from Graves-End* has several good passages of verse, and in *The Black Rod,* which is mainly statistical, the prose is occasionally sonorous and impressive in the accent of Donne. The interest of the book as a whole is, however, chiefly educational. Dekker's mind would appear to be that of a not too observant, fat churchwarden; though, confronted with death, he expresses the fear common to healthy, comfortable men with unexpected majesty and imagination. Nashe's remark that "It argueth a very rusty wit, so to doate on worm-eater Elde" should not be forgotten when judging them: the trimmings of unaccustomed language and picturesque local colour are apt to falsify one's judgment of a sturdy commonplace mind. In any case, these pamphlets are only hack-work and do not form a criterion for their author.

DEVOTIONS UPON EMERGENT OCCASIONS. By JOHN DONNE. SIMPKIN, 3/6.

When Donne had not long been Dean of Paul's, he was attacked by a serious illness which nearly killed him. But his mind did not relinquish that stringent examination of himself, body and soul, which is the distinctive faculty of his genius, for this book was created out of that disease. The progress of the illness is divided into twenty-three stages and is a narrative with a natural climax and release. Each stage is the subject of a meditation, an expostulation, and a prayer. Some of Donne's finest prose is here and his most mature thought. Donne's prose works are difficult to come by and they are often hard reading. This volume is an exception on both counts; it contains also his fine last sermon, "Death's Duel."

THE LIFE OF WILLIAM GODWIN. By FORD K. BROWN. DENT, 16/-.

A biography of 350 pages should leave little to be said of its subject, but Mr. Brown's book is a haystack of facts and contemporary judgments in which it is extremely difficult to find the needle Godwin. Mr. Brown has read copiously the lady-novelists and memoir-writers of the period, but he seems to have formed no opinion in his own mind of Godwin's worth. The book whets the appetite for *Caleb Williams* and *Political Justice,* but it is a sedative aperitif.

BEATRICE CENCI. By CORRADO RICCI. Translated by M. Bishop and H. L. Stuart. 2 vols. HEINEMANN, 32/-.

Competent authorities having testified to the thoroughness and accuracy of the author's research, most of the notes giving textual references for statements have been justifiably omitted from this edition. Emphasis is thus placed on the literary qualities of the work.

Signor Ricci has very thoroughly exploded the "Cenci Legend." This in itself, "historical truth" notwithstanding, was hardly worth the tremendous labour. Nor is the true character of Beatrice, though far more heroic than Shelley's wan wraith, of any great interest. But the author, anxious that she should emerge from her background, has traced very fully the careers of even the most minor actors. The result is a vivid and convincing account of the Italy of the later Renaissance. Despite the complexity of the evidence and the determination of every witness never to tell the truth while there was yet a lie to be invented, the arrangement is lucid as is the, occasionally humorous, prose, in which respect the translators are to be congratulated.

WANDERINGS IN ARABIA. By C. M. DOUGHTY. DUCKWORTH, 12/6.

"Tell me (said he) since thou art here again in the peace and assurance of Ullah, and whilst we walk, as in the former years, towards the new blossoming orchards, full of the sweet spring as the garden of God, what moved thee, or how could'st thou take such journeys into the fanatic Arabia?"

"Whither would I go, said they, to lose myself in lawless land, to be an outlaw, if only for my name of Nasrâny, and far from all succour; where they themselves, that were of the religion and of the tongue, durst not adventure? Khalîl, think better for thyself, and return with us, whilst the way is open, from this hunger-stricken wilderness and consumed by the sun."

Only one of the many who questioned or reasoned with Doughty seems to have guessed what may have been the truth; "and yet I tell thee, wilt thou needs adventure, the Aarab are good folk and thou wilt enlarge thy breast (feel thy heart to be free) amongst them.'' Yet it must not be forgotten that, though the ancient monuments may have been only an excuse, Doughty increases his difficulties and dangers in order to see and record them (and even prints long appreciations of his labours from French scholars). And *Arabia Deserta,* were it for nothing else, would be valuable for the information it contains; it is full of facts as to heights, the configuration and geologic structure of the land, flora and fauna, variations in the nomadic customs and local linguistic differences. If Doughty was seeking his semblables, the only life he could freely live, he apparently felt the necessity for an external aim to keep him steady amongst the shiftless Aarab.

Whatever the imperative inner need was that drove him to endure such great suffering and frequent peril, something of his own implacable resolution is necessary to read his narrative. *Arabia Deserta* is a difficult book. It is difficult because of Doughty's inexorable fidelity to his experience and the unpalatable nature of that experience to readers ''born to the Frankish living, full of superfluity.'' Because it reproduces so exactly all that Doughty suffered in his ill-nourished body, wasted by long camel journeys over the herbless, sun-stricken desert and the knowledge that if not slain on the way at the whim of his fanatical travelling companions, sworn to his protection, but faithless to him, a Nasrâny, the hour of his arrival might be his last, the reader is often daunted. If Doughty had dwelt more often on his feelings, it would be easier reading; there would be at least a momentary escape from the oppressive reality.

Another influence is the prose style. The strangeness of this soon wears off, but its harsh vitality never diminishes. It is, indeed, a remarkable instrument; sonorous and varied in rhythm, it is often sweet, but never soft. It differs in little, except articulation, from conventional English, but it is entirely personal and always apt to the matter:

''We removed at sunrise: the sudden roaring and ruckling hubbub of the Bedouins' many camels, grudging to be loaded, made me remember the last year's *haj* journeys!''

This is a handy one volume reprint of the authorized abridgment of *Arabia Deserta.* It is to be recommended, if only on the score of cheapness, to those who have not the time for the whole work. Nothing essential is omitted; *Arabia Deserta* has no formal anatomy. Most objective in manner, it is every word of it informed by Doughty.

C.H.R.

CASEMENTS. By RICHARD CLOUDESLEY SAVAGE. DENT, 5/-.

Of the fifty poems here translated from fifty French poets, the majority are mediocrities. There is nothing by Corbière, Laforgue, Rimbaud, or, among the moderns, Toulet, for example, or Pellerin. Mr. Savage seems to have gone out of his way to choose duds. One of the few exceptions is Valéry, whose early "Narcisse" is given here, inexpressibly mutilated. We have also compared the version of Baudelaire's "Les Petites Vieilles" with the original and find the discrepancies deplorable.

AU CHEVET DE MOREAS. PAR MARCEL COULON. EDITIONS DU SIECLE, 15 Frs.

This is one of the charming little volumes with portrait and autographs which the French have the habit of devoting to recently defunct writers. Sometimes these brochures have a documentary value, but here the interest is simply necrophilistic. Moréas died in 1910. It is doubtful if time will ratify the judgment his contemporaries passed on his work; the "classicism" for which it was praised affects us now as pastiche. But it is in any case the man who dies, not the poet. What possible interest can there be, beyond the common human one, in clinical observations of the process? Moréas died well, and, no doubt, better poets have died worse. Certainly the disciple fluttering round the bedside lacked his master's dignity.

"Je voudrais prendre des notes, mais il me l'a défendu. J'en griffonne tout de même mais il veille; c'est-à-dire qu'il se réveille.

'Qu'est-ce que vous écrivez là? . . .

Une lettre, mon cher maître . . . .'

Je me méfiais et j'avais en effet une lettre en train.

'Vous me laisserez bien écrire à ma femme, cependant.

Apportex-moi ca! . . '

Je lui mets la lettre sous les yeux. Son regard me montre qu'il n'est pas dupe, mais il ne dit rien."

L'HOMME COUVERT DE FEMMES. DRIEU LA ROCHELLE, N.R.F., 9 Frs.

This novel is a disappointment after the admirable work in *"Plainte Contre Inconnu."* The detachment of the previous tales is lost in descriptions of the erotic mal-adjustment of the principal character, which is too often given expression in rumination and self-confession. The book is by no means well-organized, and the author's power of conveying character is limited to one or two of the women.

THE EDITORS will consider any MSS. for publication under the usual conditions as to responsibility and return. Authors' agents are notified that we see no grounds for the exemption they assume from the obligation of paying for the return of rejected MSS.

SELECT LIST OF BOOKS RECEIVED

BIOGRAPHY AND LETTERS

BEETHOVEN'S LETTERS. A Selection. Edited with notes by Dr. A. C. Kalischer. Dent, 10/6.

DOSTOEVSKY PORTRAYED BY HIS WIFE. Translated by S. S. Koteliansky. Routledge, 10/6.

THE LETTERS OF A. P. TCHEHOV TO OLGA KNIPPER. Translated by Constance Garnett. Chatto and Windus, 15/-.

HERZEN'S MEMOIRS, Vol. 5. Translated by Constance Garnett. Chatto and Windus, 3/6.

THE LIFE OF WILLIAM GODWIN. By Ford K. Brown. Dent, 16/-.

BEATRICE CENCI. By Corrado Ricci. Translated by M. Bishop and H. L. Stuart. Two vols. Heinemann, 32/-.

CRITICISM

JAMES JOYCE. HIS FIRST FORTY YEARS. By Herbert S. Gorman. Bles, 7/6.

THE REVIVAL OF ÆSTHETICS. Hubert Waley. Hogarth Press, 3/6.

HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE. Vol. 1: THE MIDDLE AGES AND THE RENAISSANCE. By Emile Legouis and Louis Cazamian. Dent, 10/6.

MADAME DE STAEL. By D. G. Larg. Translated by V. Lucas. Routledge, 12/6.

FICTION

THE CHARTERHOUSE OF PARMA. By Stendhal. Translated by C. K. Scott Moncrieff. 2 vols. Chatto & Windus, 7/6 each.

THE QUESTION MARK. By M. Jaeger. Hogarth Press, 7/6.

THE EDUCATION OF A YOUNG MAN. By Matius Lyle. Hogarth Press, 7/6.

INNOCENT BIRDS. By T. F. Powys. Chatto and Windus, 7/6.

THE SACRED TREE (THE TALE OF GENJI, Vol. 2). Translated by Arthur Waley. Allen and Unwin, 10/6.

GENERAL LITERATURE

LAST ESSAYS. By Joseph Conrad. Dent, 7/6.

THE ART OF BEING RULED. By Wyndham Lewis. Chatto and Windus, 18/-.

REPRINTS

SWIFT. Selected Letters. Bohn's Popular Library. Bell, 2/-

DEKKER'S PLAGUE PAMPHLETS. Edited by F. P. Wilson. Oxford University Press, 9/-.

DONNE. Devotions upon Emergent Occasions, *with* Death's Duel. Abbey Classics. Simpkins, 3/6.

DOUGHTY. Wanderings in Arabia. Duckworth, 12/6.

THREE POEMS FROM A SEQUENCE: HERO ENTOMBED

I

My lamp, full charged with its sweet oil, still burns,
Has burned a whole year and it shows no check.
My cerements there
Lie where I rolled them off,
The death odours within them,
Harshly composed, coiled up in marble fold.

This tent of white translucent stone, my tomb,
Lets through its panel such a ray of light,
Blind and refracted,
As a calm sea might do
Through its tough warping lens
From the ascendant moon at its highest step.

Some have complained the gentleness of the sea,
Stagnantly streaming, with quick ebb withdrawing
Along the tideless South.
Thus sound to me,
And like its noonday hiss
Wheels, voices, music, thunder, the trumpet at dawn.

You must not think my entertainment slight
In the close prison where I walk all day.
"And yet, entombed,
Do not your thoughts oppressed
Pluck off the bandage from your sores,
From arrow-wound and from ulcered armour-gall?"

My wounds are dried already to pale weals.
I did not fall in battle as you think,
On Epipolæ
Dashed from the rock head down
Or in the quarries stifle,
But stoned by words and pierced with beams of eyes.

So, patient, not regretful, self-consoling
I walk, touching the tomb wall with my fingers,
In silent entertainment.
On the smooth floor
The stirred dust ankle deep
Steams up languid, to clog the struggling lamp flame.

Syracuse.

II

With such frail stuff they use to shroud our limbs,
You'd think the mightiest dead were childish weak.
In a waking spasm
Each can snap off
His linen fetters,
Then rend away the scarf sealing his lips.

Such heavy tears you weep, you other dead.
They drop like ripe pearls out of Indian grain
Under the harvesting south wind.
Here white Nero
Shows his deep severed throat.
Does that proud front bear sorrow and disquiet?

Within what dance shall ransomed limbs conform,
And with what measure trance recaptured day?
I live. I live.
Yet faintly my voice sounds.
Hero am I,
A being sacred, blessed in its repose?

To break the line that sleep had writhed me in,
About the arms as with long bands of wool,
Is nothing.
I must crack the ribs apart.
Ah, look where lies
An unbodied lump of sweetness at the heart.

III

Lift your sail, nautilus. Make out for sea.
Often you've passed me in your companies,
Your fellows voyaging under fleshy sails,
Drawn fine and brittle and bright as eyelid silk,
And stung by salty drops blown off the waves,
Peopling a watery valley, mounting its ridge.

The nautilus unloops his sail,
Looses the web and it expands
Gradually full, now strains its best,
Tautening. At last burn visibly
The purple veins that seam it through
Over the curious rocking keel.

Launch, nautilus, and stretch your tender sail,
Light swimming guest, wandering shell,
It hears me murmuring inward in my tomb,
Yet I spoke softly for no ear.
And does my impulse bend its foolish course,
Stretching the crystal on its yards?

You move. You move. Though viewless, strong
The unknown hand that thrusts you out
To watch the sea bed looking down,
With pearls confounded in its slime.

And thus, remotely hid, I swell
The supple tissue on your spars,
In whirlwind slant the quivered mast
Until your cup is brimmed with salt.

So whelm the gentle fleet I sped,
And now in torment furl those coloured sails.
Among the wealth that vigour shoots
I'll find another pastime for my need.

PETER QUENNELL.

FROM ROSANOV'S *SOLITARIA*

[V. V. ROSANOV (born 1856; died 1919) occupies a unique place in Russian literature, mainly owing to the three last books which he wrote: *Solitaria,* published in 1912 and suppressed by the censor on account of its too outspoken tone on matters of Christianity and sex; *Fallen Leaves,* Bundle I, published in 1913; and *Fallen Leaves,* Bundle II, published in 1916.

On taking his degree in 1881, at the Moscow University, in the Faculty of History and Philology, Rosanov became a teacher in secondary schools in the provinces. A year before he took his degree, he married Mlle. Souslov, the mistress of F. Dostoevsky—a union which turned out unhappily, and in 1886 husband and wife parted. Bored by his career as a teacher, Rosanov entered the Civil Service in 1893 and went to live in Petersburg. Subsequently he formed a new union, this time happily, as can be seen from his frequent references in *Solitaria* and *Fallen Leaves* to his "Friend". In 1899, he joined the staff of the reactionary daily the *Novoye Vremya,* and, from that time until the suppression of the paper by the Bolsheviks in 1918, he was engaged in journalism. But, apart from his journalistic activity, Rosanov also published several books on philosophy and religion, as for instance, *On Understanding,* 1886, *The Legend of the Great Inquisitor* (a work on Dostoevsky, whom he very much admired), 1889, *The Place of Christianity in History,* 1890, *The Family Problem in Russia,* 1903, *The Russian Church,* 1909, etc.

On the reactionary *Novoye Vremya* Rosanov occupied a foremost position, for with considerable talent, though with utter cynicism, he dared to defend ideas and policies which no reactionary journalist would have dreamt of supporting in the Press. Whether it was necessary for his paper to show that the Church acted nobly in excommunicating Leo Tolstoy, or to prove that Jews killed young Christian boys in order to use their blood for ritual purposes—Rosanov performed the task unblushingly, boldly, and most cynically. (But see his own explanation of this in *Solitaria*). And, while writing his journalistic articles in that vein in the *Novoye Vremya,* he wrote in a diametrically opposite vein, under a different pseudonym, and in other journals, articles directed against the Church and against dogmatic conceptions of Christianity. Why he behaved so, and generally what sort of man Rosanov was, may be gathered from his last three books, which though entirely personal and intimate, yet in their essence and form represent something quite new and original in Russian literature.

One point should be made clear. A great many of the aphoristic statements, forming Rosanov's last three books, were jotted down by him whenever and wherever the idea might occur: sitting in a railway car, or in a cab, or even in the W.C., or on the soles of his slippers while bathing. His thoughts on prostitution he actually wrote down while following Souvorin's coffin. Very many fragments bearing the mark "at numismatics" were written down by him while examining or playing with his collection of rare coins.

(In the following selection the original order of the notes has been retained).]

OUR ideas come we know not whence and go we know not where.

The first: however you may sit down *to write* a certain thing, you sit down and write an *altogether different thing.*

Between "I want to sit down" and "I sat down"—there passes a minute. Whence then come those thoughts, on a new *theme,* which are altogether different from those with which I paced the room, and even sat down in order to write *just them* down? . . .

* * * *

It is as though that damned Gutenberg has licked all writers with his copper tongue, and all of them have lost their souls in print, they have lost their face, character. My "I" is only in manuscript, as is the "I" of every writer. This must be the reason why I have a superstitious fear of tearing up letters, note-books (even my children's exercise books), manuscripts—and I don't tear up anything. I have kept intact all the letters from my school friends; with regret, as the pile ever grows bigger and bigger, I tear up only mine, and that only rarely.

(*In a railway car*).

* * * *

When the decadents used to come to my house, I would let them out, the sterile ones, after midnight, but would detain the last one, the kind Victor Proteikinsky (a teacher with fantasies), and point to a place behind the door.

Man has two feet; but if, say, five persons leave their goloshes in the hall, it seems an awful lot. Behind the door stood a multitude of little goloshes so that I myself used to be surprised. To count them quickly was impossible. And both I and Proteikinsky would burst out laughing:

"What a lot!"

"What a lot!"

I always thought with pride: *"Civis Romanus sum".* There sit down to my table ten persons, including the servants. And all are fed by my labour. All of them find *a place in the world* round my labour. And by no means is Hertzen *a civis Rossicus,* but "Rosanov".

Hertzen was only having "a pleasant time". . . .

* * * *

Newspapers, I think, will pass away just as the "eternal" wars of the Middle Ages, as women's "tournures", etc. They are still kept up by "universal education", which is even going to become "compulsory". A fellow with a "compulsory education" is certainly interested to read something "about Spain". It will begin, I think, with *disaccustoming* oneself to newspapers. Then people will begin to regard reading papers as simply indecent, cowardly ("*parva anima*").

"What do you live by?" "Well, by what *The Voice of*

Truth declares'' (they have invented such a title !), or ''*The Final Truth''* (they'll invent such a title to-morrow). He who hears that reply will smile, and those *smiles* will gradually see them to the grave.

* * * *

Nina Rudnev (a relation), a girl of seventeen, said in reply to the *masculine, manly, strong* in me :

''The only *masculine* thing in you . . . are your trousers.''

She cut her words short. . .

I.e., apart from the clothes, is it all *feminine?* I never was liked by women (except by ''my Friend''), and this explains women's antipathy to me, which always (from my school days) worried me so much.

* * * *

The secret of authorship consists in the constant and involuntary music in the soul. If it is not there, a man can only ''make a writer of himself''. But he is not a writer.

Something is flowing in the Soul. Eternally. Constantly. What? Why? Who knows?—least of all the writer.

(*Examining my coins*).

* * * *

The pain of life is much more powerful than the interest in life. That's why religion will always conquer philosophy.

* * * *

In the idea of prostitution—''the fight against which is hopeless''—enters incontestably ''I belong to all'', i.e., that which also enters in the idea of a *writer, orator, advocate, official* in the service of the State. Thus, on one hand, prostitution is the most social of phenomena, to a certain extent the archetype of *sociality*—and it may even be said that *rei publicæ natæ sunt ex feminis publicis,* ''the first States were born of the instinct of women towards prostitution''. . . At any rate, it is not worse than ''Rome grew great through its vicinity to the river Tiber'' (Mommsen) or ''Moscow grew great owing to the geographical peculiarities of the river Moskva''. And, on the other hand, there *indeed* enters into the essence of an actor, writer, advocate, even of a ''Father who officiates for everybody''—the psychology of the prostitute, i.e., the indifference to ''all'' and the kindness to ''all''. ''Funeral or wedding?'' asks the priest of a caller, with an equally smooth, vague smile, ready to pass to ''congratulation'' or to ''condolence''. A scholar in so far as *he is published,* a writer inasmuch as *he is printed,* are certainly prostitutes. Professors are most certainly only *prostitués pêcheurs.* Hence does it not follow that ''prostitution is indispensable'', like the State, the Press, etc., etc.? And, on the other hand, does it not follow : ''they should be forgiven'' and ''they should be left alone''? Prostitution, evidently ''so understandable'', cannot indeed be grasped by the mind by reason of the extent of its motives and essence. That it is more *deep-rooted* and more *metaphysical* than, for instance, "professorship in ordinary"—need not even be discussed. "Professorship" is a mere sparrow . . . whilst prostitution, damn it, is perhaps like the mysterious bird Gamayun. . .

Essentially, "*the most intimate* I *give to all*"—is a notion utterly metaphysical. . . Damn it all, it could make you murder out of sheer indignation, or make you . . . ponder over it without end. "As you like it," to quote the title of Shakespeare's play.

* * * *

Simply, I have no sense of form (Aristotle's *causa formalis*). I am a "clod", a "loofah". But that is because I am all spirit, and all subject: the subjective in me is indeed developed in me to an extent which I don't find, and don't imagine, in anyone else. "Well then?" . . . I am the least "born man", as though I still lay (as a clod) in my mother's womb (I love her endlessly, I mean my dead mother) and heard "paradisical melodies" (I always seem to be hearing music)—my peculiarity. "Well, then, splendid! excellent!" . . . Why the deuce do I need an "attractive face" or "new clothes", when *I myself* (in myself, as the "clod") am infinitely attractive; and in my soul—I am infinitely old, experienced, as though I were a thousand years old, and along with this I am young as a young baby. . . Right! Righto! . . .

* * * *

I should like a few people to remember me, but *by no means praise me;* and only on condition that they remembered me *along with those near to me.*

Unless they, and their *goodness,* their *honour* are remembered, I too do not want to be remembered.

Whence such a feeling? *From the feeling of guilt,* and also from the deep, sincere consciousness that I am not a good man. God has given me talent; but that is a different thing. The more terrible question, *am I a good man,* is answered in the negative.

(*Luga-Petersburg*: *in a railway car*).

* * * *

Literature has soared up like an eagle to the skies. And has fallen down. Now it is quite clear that literature is not the "sought-after invisible city".

* * * *

Rebecca N.N. began coming to see us. On the third evening when I began talking to her about the *details* (unknown to me or not quite clear) of the *mikvah,* she gave me a few answers, and then, after a silence, she remarked:

"This *name* I pronounce *aloud for the first time*".

"Mikvah?"

"But it is an *obscene word,* and among Jews it is not admissible to speak it aloud".

I grew agitated.

"But the mikvah, isn't it *sacred?*"

"Yes, it is *sacred.* . . So we were told. . . But the name is *obscene,* and isn't pronounced aloud or in the presence of others". . . .

But, really, this is the "discovery of the Pythagorian theorem" : it means then that the Jews possess *that very conception,* that the "obscene" and the "sacred" can be *compatible* ! *Coincident* ! ! *One* ! ! ! Nothing of the kind do Christians possess, nor is it possible with them. Hence a vast historical consequence :

1. With Christians everything "obscene",—and inasmuch as the "obscenity" grows,—becomes "sin", "evil", "filth", "disgusting" ; so that without comments, evidence, and demonstrations, *without theory,* the sphere of sexual life and of the sexual organs, this domain of universal shyness, of universal reserve has *sunk down into the infernal regions* of "Satanism", of "devilry", and has for its foundation the "terrible, unbearable, abomination", "universal stench".

2. But among Jews thought has been so trained that what is "obscene" (for the tongue, the eye, and the mind) does not at all appraise the inward properties of the object, does not say anything of its content ; since there is one thing, always "close at hand", familiar, the weekly ritual, which being "the height of obscenity" in name, never *pronounced aloud,* yet is at the same time "sacred".

It is not amplified, it is not pointed out ; it simply *is,* and all *know* it.

In this way *nothing has as yet been said* to the Jews, but there is given them a *thread,* holding on to which and walking on which, *everyone may himself-herself approach the idea,* the conclusion, the identity that "this" (the organs and functions), though not shown to anyone, and, though the name is "obscene" and not pronounced, is nevertheless *sacred.*

Hence a direct deduction respecting the "secret sacred" that is in the world ; "the sacred that must be hidden" and *which should never be named ;* the mysteries, *mysterium.* There is disclosed the origin of the very name, and there is cleared up the very body of the mystery. Surely, all our sacraments are open, performed in daylight, before the people ; and it is patent that the *ancient* mysteries, which some people wished to connect with ours—and those people were theologians—have, indeed, nothing in common with them, except the *name* and *pseudo-name.*

* * * *

I go on to ponder over the mikvah : here is a girl who blushes and frowns (she is a very well-read Moscow student, about 26), and yet admits : "with us this name is never *pro-*

nounced aloud . . ; this *name* is considered obscene. Yet called by an obscene name, the *thing* itself is sacred". . .

It is necessary to know the "particulars" of the mikvah.

It is not deep—about three or four feet. If deeper it is "trepha". Why? What's the reason? It is "no good", for a *something sacred* that is occurring there, but about which not a single word has been written or uttered. Only the Rabbis looked at it, measured it; and if it is not deeper than three or four feet, they say "kosher"—good. Why?—*this has not been explained to the people.*

The immersion is watched by members of the synagogue: in the case of women—by old women; and they shout to the women who immerse for the first time that *the hair shall not be visible on the surface of the water.* Given a depth of three or four feet, it is obviously necessary to sit right down, and this is hard to do and it costs an effort. And they all obediently fulfil it without understanding why. But the Rabbis say: "kosher"! If she sits right down, "kosher"—not low enough, "trepha". And in a cavity not deeper than three or four feet!

The water is not fetched from outside, is not *poured into the cavity,* but springs from the soil, *is water from the soil.* But water from the soil is *water* from a *well.* Thus, to sit down in the mikvah, always means "to sit down at the bottom of the well". They go down a very long and narrow staircase, which allows only two or three to walk abreast. The steps, as I saw at Friedberg, are "cyclopean", about two feet thick, and in descending it is necessary "to open the legs wide". . . They do not go, but "step", "crawl", making an effort, straining themselves. . . The descent is very low and deep, and it takes about ten minutes to ascend. And the woman (in her refreshment and joy)—a permanent feeling after immersion—naturally as she comes upstairs, just perceptibly throws her head back: before her eyes for ten minutes is presented the spectacle of "widely opened" legs, rounded bellies, and clean shaved modest parts (according to ritual). "All in man is the likeness and image of God", crosses the mind of those ascending during that ecstatic religious minute. "Kosher! Kosher!", the Rabbis pronounce.

And in order that all this should be done slowly, leisurely, according to the law "there may not immerse in the mikvah two simultaneously".

Thus, breathless and happy, they (men) descend and ascend, and they (women) ascend and descend.

But now they are all gone. Empty water, a basin. And an old Jew, like Moses, like Abraham, is the last to come up to the shallow basin of water. And, suddenly, placing wax candles on the edges of the basin, he lights them all!! Here is the "miserly knight" of Judaism in front of his "treasures". . . Yes, to everyone it is revolting, a shame, "it shall not be pronounced aloud''. But it was *I who built the mikvah* and I know what and wherefore : all Israel will live by this for ever, *if only he does not give this up;* and I light the sacred light here, for nowhere else is the air so charged with the bodies of Israel, and all men-women have breathed in this air, breathed in and swallowed it, and now it is flowing in an aromatic and visual current in the veins of every man-woman and begetting images and desires, by which Israel is agitated, individually and collectively.

* * * *

''Lighted wax candles''—this is a translation *into our language, into our ritual* of what the law says to Israel : ''the mikvah is sacred''. In the Talmud is found the saying : ''God is mikvah, for He purifies''. I don't remember if it says there ''the souls of'' Israel.

But let us leave the old Jew and come to ourselves, into our setting, into our mode of life, in order to explain this ancient institution of the Jews and to make us realize its soul. Let us imagine one of our dances. Movement, conversation, news, politics. The elegance of everything and the ladies' dresses. . . Room opening into room, with white pillars and walls. And, behold, one of the guests who has danced, tired by dancing, goes into a remote side room ; and seeing a basin of cold water on the table, left there forgotten and unheeded, he circumspectly looks round, shuts the door, and, taking out the excited and agitated part, immerses it in the cold pure water . . . until it cools down.

He does what the Jews do in the mikvah and the Mussulmans in their ablutions.

And he has come out. All hot, a woman rushes in there. . . She is hot, because men pressed her hands, because she made an assignation, she fixed it for to-night, immediately the ball was over. On seeing the basin, she takes it, places it on the floor, and, also with a circumspect glance round and closing the door, she does the same as the man has just recently done.

It is what the Jewesses do in the mikvah.

And many guests, in the end all of them, do the same, assured that not a single eye saw them.

If one saw it, they would die of shame. That is the exclamation which Rebecca N.N. uttered : *''the name is obscene''.*

So far—we and what we did, coolness and cleanliness. All rational.

Let us return to Judaism.

Let us imagine that through the garret window, from a dark corner, a Jew has seen all that has taken place. We should turn away and pay no attention. But he would not act like that : his ''circumcision'' has given him a different vocation, has placed him differently. Opposed to our disgust, his eyes kindle. He crawls out. He doesn't need the dance, and won't go to the ball. His place is here. He takes the basin to his quarters, very careful not to spill the water. And, shutting himself in so that no one could see him, he places the basin on the table and lights a number of image lamps (the *origin* of lamps is in Egypt) and, covering his head with a veil, as though there stood before his eyes a something he dare not look at, he begins to murmur words in an unintelligible language.

He utters prayers and incantations.

This is Judaism.

And the prayers are good ones. The Jew prays: "May they dance. These follies will pass. I pray for that which they will need in old age—*for health, for prolongation of their life;* that life itself may be fresh and strong; that they should not ache, and what they have immersed and washed here, should never ache. Ah, they know not now, for they are in love, and speak of their work and promotion. I have gone through all promotions and I want nothing. I know how *happiness depends on this that in these parts* nothing should be soiled, dirtied, weakened, but that it all should be bright and honest, as a good bill, and as promising as a new-born babe. I am a stranger to them, but I pray my Secret God that he may preserve in the whole world, *in them all,* and bless these parts for the eternal fecundity of the world and for the blossoming of the whole earth which He, the Gracious, hath *created.* Amen."

* * * *

Technique, applied to the soul, gave it omnipotence. But it also crushed the soul. There appeared a "technical soul"—a *contradictio in adjecto.* And inspiration dies.

(*The Press and everything modern*).

* * * *

Satan seduced the Pope by power; and literature he seduced by fame. . .

But Herostrates had already pointed out the surest way of "preserving a name to posterity". . . And literature which only lives by the desire of "preserving a name to posterity" has naturally in our times been penetrated throughout by Herostrates.

* * * *

And the hungry are so hungry, and yet the revolution is right. But it is right not ideologically, but as an *impact,* as *will,* as *despair.* "I am not a saint and perhaps I am even worse than you; but I am hungry, I'm a wolf, hungry and agile, and also my hunger has given me courage; and you have been an ox for a thousand years; if once upon a time you had horns and hooves to kill me, now you are old and feeble, and I'm going to *devour you".*

Revolution and the "old order" are simply "old age" and as yet "undiminished strength". But it is not an ideal, not by any means an ideal!

All social-democratic theories are reduced to the thesis—“I want to eat”. Well, the thesis is correct. Against it even the Lord Almighty has nothing to say. “He who gave me a stomach must also provide me with food.” Cosmology.

* * * *

Yes. But the dreamer walks away : for he loves his dream more than food. And in revolution there is no room for the dream.

And perhaps just because revolution has no room for the dream, it will not succeed. There will be a lot of broken crockery, but there will be no new building erected. For only he alone builds who is capable of an overpowering dream. Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci—they did build, but the revolution will “play them a most prosaic trick” and will strangle them in their youth, at the age of eleven or thirteen, when they will suddenly discover something “of their own in their soul”.

“Oh, you are proud; you don't want to mix with us, to *share,* to be chums. . . Oh, you have a soul of your own, not a communal soul. . . The community that gave life to your parents and to you—for both you and they, without the community, would have died from starvation—is now taking back what you owe it. Die!”

And “the new building”, with the features of the ass, will crumble to pieces in the third or in the fourth generation.

* * * *

Every movement of the soul in me is accompanied with *utterance.* And every utterance I want without fail to *write down.* It is an instinct. Was it not from such an instinct that (written) literature was born? For the idea of print does not occur to me and, consequently, Gutenberg came “later”.

With us literature has become so fused with print that we forget altogether that it existed before print, and essentially not at all for publication. Literature was born “by itself” (silently) and for itself; and only afterwards it began to be printed. But that is mere technique.

* * * *

Create spirit, create spirit, create spirit! Look, it has all crumbled to pieces. . .

(*In the Zagorodny Square at night; prostitutes all round*).

* * * *

From the foundation of the world, there have been two philosophies : the philosophy of the man who for some reason longs to give someone a flogging; and the philosophy of the flogged man. All our Russian philosophy is that of the flogged man. But, from Byron's *Manfred* and up to Nietzsche, the Western philosophy has been suffering from the “Sollogubian” hitch—“whom shall I give a little flogging?”

Nietzsche was respected on account of his being a German, and also because he suffered (illness). But if a Russian, and in his own name started in the spirit: "he's falling, push him down!" he would simply be called a scoundrel, and nobody would think of reading him.

(*After reading Perzov's "Between the Old and the New"*).

* * * *

Even a fool can "lead me by the nose"; and I may know that he is a fool, and that he is leading me to harm, finally to "everlasting perdition"—yet I follow him. "To my honour" it must, however, be observed that in the cases of my "being led by the nose", half relates to my profound, utter incapacity to say to the man: "you are a fool", as well as "you deceive me". I never once said it in my life. And simply in order not to place my "fellow-man" in an awkward position. I pretend, sometimes for years, that all his advice is very wise, or that he himself is *comme il faut* and looks after my interests. A quarter of these cases relates to my profound (from childhood) indifference to external life (if there be no danger). But one quarter, however, is the manifestation of sheer minus and lack of will—without any external and subsidiary reasons. . . . . .

A perfectly different thing is my dream (life): as regards that I never stirred one iota under anyone's influence whatsoever, never; it was the same in my childhood, too. In that respect I was a perfectly "un-brought up" man, utterly unyielding to "cultural influences".

Almost in proportion to the absence of *will to live* (to realization) I possessed a stubbornness of *will to dream.* I should say it was even more constant, and more persistent. . . Indeed, I never "stirred one iota and yielded to nothing".

To look at me—I am "all-declinable".

In myself (subject)—*absolutely undeclinable;* non-compatible. A sort of adverb.

* * * *

I am like a baby in its mother's womb, which does not at all wish to be born. "I'm quite warm where I am." . . .

(*In a cab: at night*).

* * * *

I longed for nothing so much as for *humiliation.* "Fame" at times gladdened me—with a purely bovine pleasure. But this never lasted long (a day or two); then would come the former longing—to be humiliated.

* * * *

Literature is the most disgusting kind of traffic. And doubly disgusting is it because certain *talent* is mixed up in it. And the objects of the traffic are real spiritual values.

* * * *

In the course of a few days humiliation always passes into such a radiance of soul as cannot be compared with anything. It is right to say that certain, and the highest, spiritual illuminations are unattainable without previous humiliation; that certain spiritual absolutes thus remain for ever hidden from those who have always triumphed, conquered, been on top.

How crude, and hence also how unhappy was Napoleon. . . After Jena he was more pitiable than a righteous beggar to whom the servants of a rich house say: God bless you.

Is it not on this mystery of *universal psychologicalness* (if universal psychologicalness does exist) that the state of soul is based, in which it may be said that finally "he wishes to suffer". . . .

How very much better we are after suffering! . . . Is it not on this that democracy's "gain without loss" is based? Democracy is not at all born in golden swathing bands of morality; it is frail like all. But democracy is in the "lowly estate", and its moral aureole has attracted everyone to it. . .

* * * *

Strictly speaking, Tolstoy has spent a profoundly banal life. . . This has never even occurred to him.

No suffering, no "crown of thorns", no heroic struggles for convictions; and even no particularly interesting adventures. Perfect banality.

Well, he had adventures "with his ideas" . . . But this is a mere literary *entourage*—the same banality only sprinkled with scent.

It seems to me that Tolstoy was little loved, and that he felt it. After his death, to say nothing of his lifetime, not a single agonizing cry was heard, nor a single mad act committed—the signs by which genuine attachment is recognized. "Everything was reasonable in the highest degree"—and that is just the stamp of banality.

* * * *

Do you know that religion is the most important, the most essential, the most needful? With the person who does not know this, not the alpha of discussion or conversation should be entertained.

Such a person should simply be *ignored*. Passed over in silence.

Yet who does know it? Are there many who do? That is why in our time there is almost *nothing* to speak about, nor *anyone* to speak with.

* * * *

The connexion of sex with God—greater than the connexion of the mind with God, greater even than the connexion of conscience with God—is gathered from this that all a-sexualists reveal themselves also as a-theists. Those gentlemen, as Buckle or Spencer, as Pisariov or Belinsky, who have said about "sex" no more words than about the Argentine Republic, are at the same time astoundingly atheistical, as though there had not been before them or near them any religion. They are literally "unbaptised" in a strange, peculiar sense. . . The "Maeterlinckian catharsis" for the last twenty or thirty years consisted in this, that very many people began to look into the root of things: one's sex, one's personal sex became of interest to all. Probably something must have happened in the semen (and in the ovum); it is remarkable that now human beings have already begun to be born quite different from those of sixty or seventy years ago. There is being born a "new generation". . . One sensible woman, the wife of a priest (A.A-va) said to me once: "The crisis among the clergy is now manifested in a great number of young wives of priests who are barren". She did not finish her thought then, but a year later I heard her say that "it is not the priests' wives who don't conceive, but that their husbands have not the strength to conceive in them". Astonishing.

Well, something of the kind has taken place in the whole "Maeterlinckian generation". It took place not in the mode of thinking, but in the sex; and only afterwards also in the mode of thinking.

* * * *

Always doing something, planning something. . .

(*About Jews*).

* * * *

I feel somehow sad (and frightened) at the thought that being dead (and moreover "an author") people will start praising me.

Perhaps this will be well-founded, but that appreciation will ignore my "regrettable incidents". And receiving not according to my deserts, I shall be ashamed, tormented, *guilty* there, "in the other world".

* * * *

After my death if someone loves me, let him keep silent about it.

(*Luga-Petersburg, in a railway car*).

* * * *

My soul is interwoven of dirt, tenderness and sadness. Or:

It is like gold-fish, playing in the sun, but placed in an aquarium filled with dung-impregnated water.

And they are not suffocated there. Quite the contrary. . .

It does not sound like truth. And yet *it is so.*

* * * *

God has gilded me all over.
I feel it. . . .
Lord! How much I feel it!

* * * *

Every line of mine is holy writ (not in the scholastic, not in the ordinary sense), and every thought of mine is a holy thought, and every word of mine is a holy word.

"How dare you?" shouts the reader.

"Don't you see, I dare", and I laugh at him in reply.

I may be a "fool" (there are rumours), perhaps even a "swindler" (there is gossip to that effect); but the *width* of thought, the *incommensurability* of "horizons revealed"—no one has had that before me in the way I possess it. And all of it came from my own mind, without borrowing an iota even. Wonderful. I am simply a wonderful man.

(*On the sole of my slipper; bathing*).

* * * *

They imagine that "I played up to the authorities". Whereas the peculiar trait in my psychology consists in such a strong feeling of a void around me—a void, silence, and non-living around and everywhere—that I hardly know, hardly believe, hardly admit that there are other people contemporaneous with me. It seems impossible and absurd, yet it is so.

* * * *

No interest at all in self-realization, a lack of all external energy, of the will to live. I am the most unself-realizing man.

Translated by S. S. KOTELIANSKY.

AT MELVILLE'S TOMB

Often beneath the wave, wide from this ledge
The dice of drowned men's bones he saw bequeath
An embassy. Their numbers, as he watched,
Beat on the dusty shore and were obscured.

And wrecks passed without sound of bells,
The calyx of death's bounty giving back
A scattered chapter, livid hieroglyph,
The portent wound in corridors of shells.

Then in the circuit calm of one vast coil,
Its lashings charmed and malice reconciled,
Frosted eyes there were that lifted altars;
And silent answers crept across the stars.

Compass, quadrant, and sextant contrive
No farther tides . . . High in the azure steeps
Monody shall not wake the mariner.
This fabulous shadow only the sea keeps.

PASSAGE

Where the cedar leaf divides the sky
I heard the sea.
In sapphire arenas of the hills
I was promised an improved infancy.

Sulking, sanctioning the sun,
My memory I left in a ravine—
Casual louse that tissues the buckwheat,
Aprons rocks, congregates pears
In moonlit bushels
And wakens alleys with a hidden cough.

Dangerously the summer burned
(I had joined the entrainments of the wind).
The shadows of boulders lengthened my back.
In the bronze gongs of my cheeks
The rain dried without odor.

"It is not long, it is not long;
See where the red and black
Vine-stanchioned valleys—" but the wind
Died speaking through the ages that you know
And hug, chimney-sooted heart of man!
So was I turned about and back, much as your smoke
Compiles a too well-known biography.

The evening was a spear in the ravine
That throve through very oak. And had I walked
The dozen particular decimals of time?
Touching an opening laurel, I found
A thief beneath, my stolen book in hand.

"Why are you back here—smiling an iron coffin?"
"To argue with the laurel," I replied:
"Am justified in transience, fleeing
Under the constant wonder of your eyes—."

He closed the book. And from the Ptolemies
Sand troughed us in a glittering abyss.
A serpent swam a vertex to the sun
—On unpaced beaches leaned its tongue and drummed.
What fountains did I hear? what icy speeches?
My memory, committed to the page, had broke.

PRAISE FOR AN URN

In Memoriam: E.N.

It was a kind and northern face
That mingled in such exile guise
The everlasting eyes of Pierrot
And, of Gargantua, the laughter.

His thoughts, delivered to me
From the white coverlet and pillow,
I see now, were inheritances—
Delicate riders of the storm.

The slant moon on the slanting hill
Once moved us toward presentiments
Of what the dead keep, living still,
And such assessments of the soul

As, perched in the crematory lobby,
The insistent clock commented on,
Touching as well upon our praise
Of glories proper to the time.

Still, having in mind gold hair,
I cannot see that broken brow
And miss the dry sound of bees
Stretching across a lucid space.

Scatter these well-meant idioms
Into the smoky spring that fills
The suburbs, where they will be lost.
They are no trophies of the sun.

HART CRANE.

A SUBURBAN INCIDENT

IN those days (he said to me) I very rarely came to London. My father, who was a Russian and had never even taken the trouble to be naturalized, in spite of his thirty years in England and his English family, sent me abroad as soon as I had come down from the University for the last time. He had connexions with various Anglo-Russian firms and fixed me up as a correspondent with a shipping company that almost monopolized emigration affairs between Eastern Europe and North America. I had a very easy time and was never in one town for more than four or five months: I ranged from Kovno to Warsaw, Moscow, Kiev, and Odessa. I read an immense amount, and, the rest of the time, I lounged and absorbed all that presented itself to my five senses. I was both a boulevardier and a man of books, I was almost completely master of myself, and I realize now that, as it happened, I was quite capable of being trusted with such a life.

I found myself in London, after my first year abroad, in the July of an abnormally hot summer. The family was at a resort on the West coast, and I had bargained for the freedom of a few days in Town before joining it there. I was almost childishly in love with London. I was amorous of our sombre looking house in Kensington which I had all to myself but for an unobtrusive housekeeper; I was amorous of the streets and the English voices; I felt emphatically that, after all, there was no place like London. This mood prepared me for anything. I could even have committed a regrettable piece of folly.

On the morning after my arrival, I left the house at about ten o'clock. There was a heat haze through which the sun fell, as it were, with the hard edge of its brightness worn off. I suppose that you too have felt how indefinably mysterious that dulled yellow London sunlight is: one feels as though something quite sinister were hovering round, while the solidity of houses and pavements gives one a charming sense of safety from a danger which one knows is only imagined. I strolled about the West End. I remember being in Holborn, at midday, where, at my own bookshop, I bought a volume of someone or other's poems. I was out again in the heat and the dust and the foul blue petrol smoke of a lorry; but I was ready to take my London whole, at a gulp, and the very intensity of its noise and distress was satisfying to me.

It was close on one o'clock when I reached the northern limit of Islington at the bus terminus at Finsbury Park. Standing on the pavement in front of the glittering entrance to a cinema, I felt that I was uncompromisingly in London. There was dirt, noise, squalor, tawdriness, but there was strength and peace. I had the illusory sensation of being in my element. I crossed the road and went in to Lyons'.

I was far from being hungry. I only wanted a rest, something cold to drink, and to watch the people. I passed between the two counters, brilliant with coloured bottles and sweets, to the glass-roofed hall at the back. The sunlight fell here in pale, dusty, green shafts. The place was fairly crowded, but I found an empty table against the wall. I sat down, put my hat, gloves, and book on the chair at my side, and, leaning my shoulders against the lower rim of the great mirror at my back, stared round me. I ordered an ice.

Not for long was I to have my table to myself. A girl sat down opposite me. She may have been twenty-two or three and was decently tall for a woman. She was a girl of the people. She struck me as being plain in face. One could not say that any one feature was bad: but her grey eyes, her nose, her mouth were unexceptional, and their expression was, for me, flat, ordinary. She was very strongly built, firm in the lines of her neck and arms, and she was dressed in a cheap and unobtrusive imitation of the prevailing fashion, with her small hat, her short brown frock, her artificial silk stockings, and her dusty, cracked patent shoes. She had a queer habit of thrusting one leg out sideways in the passage between the rows of tables, so that I had my girl from tip to toe as she sat eating an uninviting mess of hot meat.

It really was abominably hot in that room. The heat weighed down on one; but I felt no discomfort on that account. On the contrary, I felt possessed of immense energy. I was pleased with myself. Suddenly, the girl addressed me:

"Isn't it hot?" she said.

That she should speak to me or I to her seemed the last thing that could have happened, and I made a startled movement: and then I felt myself invaded by a peculiar friendliness towards her that enveloped me suddenly and irresistibly. I laughed and said that it was like a bake-oven in that place. She told me that she liked the heat; and, because I laughed in an aimless but friendly spirit at the information, she did too.

"It's the hottest day we've had," she went on, "and I'm glad I haven't to go to work this afternoon. I work at a sweet shop in Stroud Green Road," she confided, "and we close on Thursday afternoons." I laughed again in sympathy.

"Well, won't you come out with me?" I demanded all at once, and you must believe me when I say that never in my life had I thought so little before speaking. Her head, which was bent over her plate, jerked up, and she looked at me fixedly for a second or two before she lowered it. I must have gone through a scrutiny to which all the powers of penetration that girl possessed were formidably applied.

"Yes," she said simply, without any sort of affectation.

I had finished my ice and, as I waited for her, I thought that I really had no idea of what was going to happen. I was facing an unknown which was not the less mysterious because it was not an abyss and would not exact courage. I confess that the physical nearness of my girl meant much, but it by no means obsessed me.

When we were out in the street, she took my arm. She was the first woman who had ever leant on my arm, because, you know, the women I knew had dropped that habit long ago. She thrust her strong body up against mine in an essentially matter-of-fact way, and in so doing she gave me a good whiff of her cheap perfume. The effect of this was both poignant and unforeseen: I was moved by profound pity. The thought of the soiled, rubbishy clothes, that were meant to be attractive, the yellow silk stockings, and the patent shoes scored with white cracks, filled me with weakening commiseration. Her condition, symbolized concretely by her bad perfume, made me so suddenly unhappy that I effectively lost my sense of adventure, my sense of lounging nonchalance. I was, at last, you might say, up against my humanity.

She guided me into the park. We walked slowly, without talking, across a wide, hot, asphalt drive, and down an alleyway between railed-off lawns and flower-beds. I heard her speaking: "It's nice in here. I thought it'd be nicer in here than at the pictures."

"Rather. Much nicer," I said. I looked about and saw that, although the grass plots, where one could walk, were threadbare and dingy, all the flowers were bright and fresh. We sat down on a seat in the shade. She kept persistently close to me. She must have been tired, or perhaps those wretched shoes of hers were hurting her feet, because she sighed with relief as she crossed her legs. Her arms lay in her lap, naïvely and peacefully, and her hands, with their ugly thumb nails, were closed over her cotton gloves and her shabby black handbag.

"Wasn't it funny, us meeting like that and coming out?"

"Oh," I said, " I hadn't anything to do, and nor had you, it seems." This fictitious effort to normalize our companionship made her smile. I gathered from her subsequent silence and the way in which she reclined against me that she was content; and her content gave me content too. I hesitate to say what precise pleasure she had. It was not as though I was giving her an exciting time or laying myself out to be particularly agreeable. Then, suddenly, she changed tactics. She sat upright. She turned towards me and extended one arm behind me straight out along the back of our seat. I stretched my legs and stared down at them, so that I had in my line of vision one of her feet just touching me I admired the clear cut ankle bone and the shape of her foot that not even the hideous shoe could hide. She began speaking of herself, and I listened intently. Heaven alone knows what she didn't tell me. I made no movement, and the stream of her words soaked into my consciousness so that I felt heavy with its weight. She told me of one brother who was killed in France, and of another who was killed at the Dardanelles. The combined loss had sent the mother to the grave. As for her father, she had neither seen nor heard of him for twelve years. He might be rich in

America or Australia, for all she knew. He might have served in the war and been blown to pieces as he deserved. "He was a rotter," she said. He was a weak, easy-going, improvident rotter. She told me how she hated her work. In the winter, her hands would be covered with broken chilblains. She asked me to imagine what it was like serving sweets with itching fingers. "I used to think I'd go mad. Looking at me you wouldn't think I'd get chilblains, would you?" she appealed all at once, and I shook my head in silence. It seemed as though someone were binding my forehead with sharp wire. The nerves in my eyes were smarting. She spoke without a gesture, in a contained voice, and her speech was simple and fluent, with its bad grammar and bad intonation. She made the great point that the summer was her paradise and, as if to prove it, she abruptly stopped talking and renewed her indolent posture of basking in the warmth, pressing one side and shoulder against my body.

How long we remained like that, I can't say. I expected something so different from this girl of the people, and yet what she gave me was eminently reasonable. I was distressed: the park, the frayed grass, the deadening heat, the girl at my side, my own strained heart, all seemed elements of a dream, not bad, but infinitely wearying. She stirred at last. "You are a nice boy," she said, "I'll take you home for tea." She got to her feet. I thought, with a kind of forced and unnecessary jocularity, that I might as well go the whole hog.

It was not far to the old house where, apparently, she had one room. The place had seen better days; but the mock, yellow-plastered pillars in the porch could never have been impressive even before their coating crumbled and left dirty white scars. On opening the door, one became aware of a thick smell of cooking and tobacco; but one might have been in the house of the dead if it weren't that the atmosphere was of the living.

Her room was at the back, on the second floor, fair sized as the rooms in those houses go. It was furnished with a wardrobe which had a mirror, a bed, a round table, two chairs, and a washstand, accommodating, besides elementary toilet requisites, her few articles of crockery. On the wall over her bed she had pinned up three or four "art-plates" of film stars, published weekly in cinema papers: a woman in massive furs in the arms of a man in evening clothes—you know the sort of thing. She made me sit down, and she busied herself about getting tea, lighting the gas-ring that stood in the fender, and rinsing the cups and saucers in her wash-basin. I wasn't hungry and her preparations took away the trace of appetite I might in my imagination have conjured up; but I ate well with her opposite me, and was glad to take the jam, for it covered the taste in the butter. I had more than one cup of tea too, although it had never before occurred to me that a human being was capable of washing its crockery in the same basin in which it washed its hands and face.

When we had done, I dragged my chair to the open window. The sun was going and the sky was full of hot, fading light. I began thinking for the first time what I, what we, were going to do next. The curious fact is that I couldn't then have left her. Whether I regarded that as desertion of some kind, or whether I expected any more of her, I can't say. I felt I was properly in a vivid dream and I didn't want to wake up. I felt somehow that I could wake myself up at will, when I got too frightened to go on sleeping. I looked at her. "Well?" I asked.

She was standing upright, looking over my head into the blue sky. I had no doubt for a moment that she was mine. I was for a moment in love; but she was no more than the incarnation of what I loved. I could have grovelled madly at her knees; but even then she was very impersonal for me, no more than the present and available form of her sex. And she was, completely, a good woman.

Suddenly she dragged me out of these thoughts and re-established herself in my eyes as a personality.

"I'm not going out with you now," she said, staring at me, "you just go away."

"Why?" I demanded.

"Oh, you know! Where can you take me? I don't want to go to the pictures, where it's stuffy. I haven't got any clothes to wear. You couldn't take me to your nice places, could you, when I ain't got any decent clothes? You're a nice boy. Didn't I ask you up 'ere? I knew you was a nice boy. You just go away now."

As I looked at her my face and body grew hot. It was present to me lucidly, indeed my grasp of the fact strained me physically to the utmost, that I could have taken her home, have let her bath and dress herself in one of my youngest sister's frocks. It would have fitted her perfectly, everything of Ruth's would have fitted her. I could have done all that so easily; so easily have given her good food for once and shown her pretty things. There were no material obstacles to overcome; not one. My heart beat furiously with the very possibility of it, and I waited passionately for my own voice. I fell forward in my chair and covered my face with my hands: my hands were damp and my face burning. I was exhausted. And I hadn't the courage to do as I thought. I simply hadn't the courage to let her bath where I bathed, to let her use my sister's comb and brush, and wear my sister's shoes. I could no more have let her do these things than have flown; and I hated myself, crushing my fingers into my palms and pressing my feet hard on the floor.

I stood up. It needed only one pace in that poor room for me to reach her. I caught her wrists and I kissed her hands and face. I stumbled down the stairs and out into the stifling street, so mortally sick that my mouth seemed full of dust.

HERBERT LEON KAHAN.

FOUNDATION STONE TO A NEW CITY HALL

Dawn, changing, on the ramparts;
Rain to spring fields; lay
On the grey stone, the redbrick walls below,
A transparent ungirt city;

Day, heralded, become
An armed host real with victory,
Marching by the eastern hills,
Paused at the gates without;

A small wind, rising,
Swept light cirrus yonder,
Unveiling the April sky
Above the streets, animating;

Vehicles appeared, the early cars
Untrammelled on light rails
Cityward, the clang of iron on stone
House to house tossed about;

Dawn, a dream fading, remembered with a start;
The transparent walls, hovering
In slender light, now corporeal;
Come forward; immortal; stone under hand.

Within the ramparts, in the modern town,
A festive quickness attested the springtime wind
With bunting hung from windows, from the cathedral spire
A full ensign flapping, athwart the light sky outpinned;

By ten o'clock, towards the great square, a concourse,
Women in holiday hats, men stiffly, in black coats
With a bright flower; a crowd, a multitude, gathered
Betimes, shouting across to friends, long before the hour;

Held back by a fence of rope, round a ring of ground
Isolated, calm oasis in an animated town
Before an unfinished building, the embryo walls
Deserted, the machinery idle, the workmen's tools laid
down.

That the new building, *that* the city hall,
That a crowning to municipal endeavour
To embellish a city founded in the ages
That shall, undying, flourish now for ever;

Workmen had laboured there many weeks on end,
Erecting engines, clearing the site,
And dusty concrete-mixing cylinders
Rattled erratically through the night;

Foundations had been hollowed in a clay bed ten
And wooden balks battened up to hold [feet deep,
Congealing clotting concrete poured
Round and over girders in the mould;

And clusters of wrought-iron stays, in rows
Intersecting on the uprooted plot of land
Protruding from the bases of concrete walls
Outlined already the building's groundfloor plan.

Day, triumphant, through
The safe channels of the ancient city
That teemed with the loud populace, waiting,
Buoyed the bright sun on high;

Royal, (the crowd, all immortal,
Vibrating to the sound of horns
By the ramparts), behind white horses
Bounded a coach on swift wheels;

A dark figure, a flower
White in his coat, smiled; raising
An elegant hat to the marvellous noise,
The forest of hands in the air;

The ceremony had begun,
The inauguration, laying of the corner stone,
With benediction
Beneath the April sun.

The April sky, quickclouded, by the light wind
Cast agile shadows of dry roofs on pavement and road,
And played on the white-robed choir, overflowing
Beyond the ramparts, up the fresh green fields;

The April wind, a spring dancers' song, stippled
The beings in ceremony below with broken chanting
Rising in fitful drift to me through the ages
High to my window, from the white-robed choir;

Below me, between the housewalls, converging, a crowd
Grouped by a concrete wall, heads bent back, singing,
Or silent by a small dark figure, bent, now labouring,
Now upright, with raised, stiff, hand;

And by degrees I distinguished them, by outlines
Seen in the daily papers, in morning-coat or at play,
These few, grouped by His Highness, in black, in hats
The local gentry, councillors, officials, mayor; [shining,

And there, to the right, beside them, in the ring
Walled by the pressing crowd that rippled slowly in,
Their wives, those firm ladies, their feathered hats
Buoyant on the sea of waiting heads:

And by the stone, the white surplices, dominating
The penitent laymen, inducted by solemn prayer
Into thought, where the old walls of the ancient city
Rise as rock with living spirit, a hope against despair;

All these, and the masons by, rough figures, hands
On ropes; waiting, I saw; coming forward, I saw;
Beckoned by the Town Hall clerk—manage silent tackle,
Raise the great rough stone swinging in the air;

The Mayor, sturdy man in a bright chain, bent forward,
To a quick hush flowing in the light wind, far
Beyond the roofs, far by the April fields
While involuntary eyes lifted, beating on the walls about
them;

And here, afar, in the sustained silence, I heard as it were
The mortar's flat fall, the grit of the trowel
Smoothing, the tang of iron on stone, the creak
Of the pulley and block, the crowd's unanimous breathing;

Saw the men slack on the ropes, the priest's hand raised,
A myriad male heads bared, the stone descend,
The choirmaster turn, and heard his warning panpipe,
And then massed voices again, the April wind

Bringing them me, high in my window, through the ages
In fitful drift, the sound then of the crowd, the crowd
Turning to go, the stone laid, the masons
Bevelling the edge, and all the bells chimed loud.

A small group, oblivious,
After the ceremony, on the ramparts,
Holding hats against the rising wind,
Agreed, pointing inwards at the city towers;

Their long shadows, by early spring evening,
Lay before them;
The upper roofs, the towers, still glowed,
Facing them, out of the gulf of twilight;

Oblivious, spurning loose stones on the ramparts,
They looked down, and with wavering sticks
Traced the builders' girders and crane
Soaring up from the square;

And, talking, they traced what landmarks
Of boyhood would disappear;
And, smiling, stared,
At the changing face of the town.

Growing old, they went down from the walls at sunset,
Walking closely, noisily; memory,
Like a small voice in the evening hush,
Clamouring.

Forgetting nothing, the small group,
Leaders of the town, went each his way,
The labour of a lifetime crowned that day,
Shaking hands, each heartily,
Good-night, with happy, broken voices,
Tired men, went, each his way.

ALEC BROWN.

THE SALVATION OF ANATOLE FRANCE

The scene is the Valley of Jehoshaphat on the day of the Last Judgment. In the foreground, the prisoners' dock; in the background, the Son in all his glory sits at the right hand of the Father. The stars fall on the earth like ripe figs, in order that a prediction in the Apocalypse may be fulfilled. Saint Peter, who has assumed the functions of Clerk of the Court, calls the guilty prisoners in alphabetical order. It is Anatole France's turn. He comes forward smiling, wearing a fur cap which he does not remove, with his book on Thaïs in his hand to keep him in countenance. The amiable Academician comes to the bar and delivers the following speech:—

Eternal,

I am now to prove three points: 1. That you do not exist; 2. Supposing you do exist, that you are not amiable; 3. Supposing you do exist and are amiable, that a man should behave as if you did not exist.

First point: You do not exist.

What image can I form of you? I have not seen you, either in the burning bush of Moses, or on Mount Sinai among thunderbolts and the roar of thunder, or on Mount Tabor in the guise of Elijah in the dazzling confusion of ophthalmia. Tertullian pretends that you are material; the Eleatics that you are a well-polished and rounded sphere; the Alexandrians that you are amorphous and limitless; my illustrated Bible that you are an old man with a snowy beard; the Cubists that you are a rhombohedron—which am I to believe? Or are you all this at once, like the cloud Hamlet pointed out to Polonius on the terrace at Elsinor, which was like a camel, a weasel, and a whale? I cannot conceive of you from your works. They are paltry and decrepit. One lucky success occurs among innumerable failures. One efficient organism implies an enormous mass of spoiled matter. Thanks to original sin—*felix culpa*!—which allowed him to taste of the tree of knowledge, man through his industry has succeeded in palliating the errors and correcting the mistakes of your labour as a bad clock-maker and a bad mason. By means of glasses he rectifies the eye, that apparatus of which a celebrated physician has said that if it had been supplied him by an optician he would have refused to accept it. With drugs and potions he prolongs the existence of a weak body which is so badly constructed that he is in danger every moment of ceasing to breathe. After this, I cannot believe in you, merely from my respect for you. It seems to me that a world so badly arranged can only be the work of the devil or of some clumsy demiurgus. In order to avoid blaspheming you, I prefer to keep you in the category of the ideal.

The notion of you is eminently contradictory. How are we to conciliate the plurality of your perfections with the simplicity of your nature? If you are the Necessary Being, then all your acts are necessitated; therefore creation is not a free and superabundant gift of your love. You are essentially just and infinitely good; but goodness is the privilege of making justice yield to forgiveness. You are one God in three persons. Let us rather confess, with Suarez, that the principle of identity does not apply to you. But notice the consequence; that principle is the very law of our thought; we can know nothing which does not submit to it. Therefore, you are for us the Unknowable. Why, then, do you become angry with atheists and accuse them of denying you? It is like reproaching us for not being able to see behind us when you have only given us eyes in front.

Small-minded people are always repeating that if God did not exist it would be necessary to invent him. They must have a cause for the universe and they invent one in their own image. If everything requires a cause, there must be a cause for God himself; and so we have made a great advance! Will it be said that God is an exception to the rule? Why, then, should not the world be an exception? Moreover, if God is necessary, I see no reason why it should be you, Jehovah, any more than Renan!

Second point: Supposing you do exist, you are not amiable.

First of all, you are not in the least interesting. You have everything and do not need us at all. You are infinitely beatified and your beatitude prevents you from sympathizing with our miseries. Pity and admiration are equally forbidden to you, for you cannot emerge from your sempiternal apathy. Allow my solicitude to reach out to those innocent creatures who, by your paternal goodness, are made to live in poverty, among calamity and death. They suffer and they need consolation; they are pitiful and justify our interest.

You are eternal and always the same: God! how tedious you must be; there is plenty of time to think of you. Earthly goods and the people here below, you see, are transitory things; they live for the space of a morning and then dissolve into nothingness. Allow us to prolong their uncertain duration by our concern for them and the memory we keep of them. The only thing which deserves to be loved is that which we shall never see twice. Jesus has clearly pointed this out: "Save the ass" said he, "which has fallen into the well, for you have plenty of time to think of the Sabbath." You cannot fly away, since you fill the whole of space; you cannot change, since you are immutable. We can always come to you, because we always have you at hand. O wisdom of fair sinful women who become penitents when the flower of their youth is faded and when they can no longer inspire desire or dispense pleasures!

You have all perfections. To me this is a reason for disliking you. In the long run, perfection wearies and becomes boring. The *Addolorata* of a primitive is more captivating than the Minerva of the villa Albani, who reflects so cold a perfection. "There is poetry in the intoxication of Thrace," said Renan to Athena; and the originality of characters is made up less from the qualities they conceal than from the defects on which they pride themselves. For my part, I prefer Lilith's prayer to your *Pater*: "O God, grant me death that I may taste life. O God, grant me remorse that I may find pleasure."

Evil is the condition of good; joys are only felt in contrast with sorrows. In this sense, you only exist because of the Devil. He is the true author of the universe, he is its charm and its beauty! Like a faithful servant, he repaired the enormous gap in your creation by a sacrifice of incalculable extent. He made possible your insolent glorification at the expense of his eternal damnation. There is the voluntary victim to whom we address in thanks our lauds and our benedictions. To him the tears of the Psalmist, to him the secret ardours in the heart of women. My good man, between ourselves, he has left you in a very paltry position, he has chosen the better part.

What sort of cult do you expect from us? We only know you through your creations and they bear a most regrettable witness of you. Through them only can I address that cult which you claim for yourself alone. In Jesus Christ it is the son of man who manifests the son of God. It was the Galilean with red curled locks who dwelt in the heart of Magdalen, not the second hypostasis of the Trinity. Observe your illogicality and your folly. The more we try to glorify your creations, the more you are piqued and go about pretending that this is sinful. What would you say of an author who was annoyed with me for writing to him: "I do not know you personally, but I have read your works; I admire them and the greatest homage I can give you is the pleasure I take in them." Are you so conscious of having made a mess of your seven days' labours that you blame us for finding a little pleasure in them? For I enclose you in this dilemma: Either you blush for your work or you are jealous of yourself.

You say it is a sin to render a cult to your creations. Yet this is the condition of my nature, since I am subject to the original blemish. Not to err would be for me to rebel, to commit the sin of pride—the sin against the Holy Ghost—the only sin which is not forgiven. What ruined Paphnuce was that he was not humble enough to commit sin with Thaïs immediately. Is it not proved by statistics that the profession of ladies of pleasure has provided the calendar of the Church with more saints than any other? Hence the just wrath of Pascal with the diabolical pride of the Stoics; for him Marcus Aurelius was a Lucifer! Verily I say unto you: Woe unto him that hath not sinned at least once, for it will be harder for him to harvest the vineyard of the Lord than for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle!

Third point: Supposing you do exist and that you are amiable, yet we should behave as if you did not exist.

We are told it is a duty to thank you on account of the promises you have made us. That is an admission that we love you from egotism and self-interest. Pure love is that of Saint Theresa: "O God, damn me, so that you may be certain my love is disinterested." Moral: The true Christian, he who does his best to be damned!

Your priests are illogical as much as you are contradictory. They proclaim sacrifice, self-forgetfulness, as the sole cardinal virtues. Then they come and tell us: One thing is necessary, to obtain salvation. What could be more egotistic, more self-interested, less generous? In a fire, the man of honour gives way to those in a greater hurry and runs the risk of a voluntary death. The fire is your hell; there will be few who escape. The honest man is he who says: "Pass on, pass on!" He gives up his turn for paradise.

Your priests also declare: We must think of nothing but the next life. By Zeus! It is just the contrary. Suppose the other life does exist; it will be an extra gift to us, and only our works here below really matter, because they will bear witness of us. We should say with the philosopher: "If there are gods, it is impossible but that the good should be rewarded; but if there are no gods, that is not a reason for not doing our duty."

To believe in you is the ruin of virtue. Its sole value depends upon the chance that it may be an illusion. The certainty of reward inevitably kills the merit. Morality would become an investment at a usurious rate with infinite interest, which would attract the most cunning people: stock-brokers, jobbers, and bookmakers. The risk alone saves the aristocracy of duty. We cannot imagine a man of honour without a little scepticism in him. Like Brutus, he ought to say to himself from time to time: "Virtue, thou art but a name". I like to see the good man afflicted; I want to have Job on his dung-hill. To act as if you did not exist is a postulate of the moral act which alone saves us from the categorical imperative of duty.

To conclude, I will add that the universe is a formidable account book opened against you, where, since the death of Jephthah's daughter, the blood of the innocent cries for vengeance, so that I have not come here to excuse myself but to hear your justification. It is true you have greatly improved yourself since Biblical times when, under the name of Iahveh, you lived in a wooden box. You were prone to vengeance, you fattened on the smoke of holocausts, you always aided successful crime. Afterwards, as man, thanks to the advice of the Serpent, became more instructed and less miserable, you became in proportion less fundamentally ignorant and ferocious. During the greatest episode of the struggle between the good and the wicked who laid claim to you, recognizing your native cruelty, you did not deliberately take the side of iniquity; in the uncertainty of the event, you retained a prudent neutrality through your interpreter. At the end of human evolution you are almost endurable; you have become quite inoffensive and playful; so that, taking all your efforts into account, I, your creature, forgive you.

An unspeakable terror shows itself on the faces of the dead. Frederick II whispers to Voltaire : "He ought to have recanted". A camelot du Roi rubs his hands. The Eternal questions with his eye the throng of doctors and confessors, placed to his right and left as in a picture by Raphael. He even glances at the nine legions of angels. All turn down their thumbs with the same feeling of implacable reprobation.

The Eternal : Obviously, Anatole France does not possess the spirit of simplicity. At times he exaggerates. But there is a lot of truth in what he says. His line of controversy is a change from that of my theologians. The surest way to punish him is to save him. Saint Peter, write the name of Anatole France in the register of the Elect.

Reflection of Renan : I wrote that God was only a man; but I did not foresee that he might be a man of wit!

LOUIS ROUGIER.

(*Translated by Richard Aldington*).

THE ZODIAC

In sleep my soul was caught up in a vision;
Before me all the far-stretched heavens lay,
And past my feet in iridescent lustre
There streamed the Milky Way.

Fast in the centre of the solar system,
Where from his rim red meteors leap and run,
A burning, flaming ball, tossed there from tumult,
Hung the gigantic sun.

And ever on the planets round him circling,
Which in long wanderings distant comets meet,
Poured from his rays, outflung in frenzied splendour,
Torrents of light and heat.

Swift globes and constellations in vast spaces
Round hotter, greater suns pursued their lines.
Locked in the rolling harmony of order
I saw circumferent signs

Enflame the night encompassing the Zodiac.
A monstrous bulk before my vision swam,
Taurus the Bull, his heavy flanks obscuring
From me the lesser Ram.

He paused: then plunged into the outer darkness,
A distant clamour shook the pallid sky,
And fast, with furious mien, advanced upon me
The mighty Gemini.

In bloody panoply of clashing armour,
Dreaming of wars of woe, brows bent in ire,
Castor and Pollux strode athwart the heavens
Exulting, shod with fire.

Their forms grew faint and fainter. Far behind them
Above the crawling Crab was seen a light
Where, sharp and glittering on the dark horizon,
The curve of Leo's sickle rent the night.

I gazed. Reaping the stars he slowly vanished
And desolation seemed to fill that place.
Suddenly in dim clouds I saw the Virgin,
Great tears fell from her face.

And o'er her head there burned a shining balance,
I saw her far below it poised alone.
The glory of the scales dissolved in shadow,
She and myself were one.

Pity poured from my heart, and terror seized me.
A glistening tail reared up and stung the bars
Of darkness down. There lay the baleful Scorpion;
Sprawling his creeping length among the stars,

He ever turns and meditates destruction.
I fled and found my rest where, near the lair
Of Capricornus, steps the lonely Archer,
Endlessly shooting arrows in the air.

Live meteors moved in multitudes around me,
The rocking comets shook me in their blast.
Then all was still and, as I looked and listened,
Bearing his watering-pots, Aquarius passed.

With silver fins amid a boundless ocean
Whose silent tide upon him flows and pales,
I saw revolving with a ceaseless motion
The Fish with glittering scales.

And then their forms were folded up in blackness;
Vast veils dropped down; my shrunken soul hung
Alone in space above the darkened heavens, [there
In frozen garb of fear.

Beatrix Holms.

IN AND ABOUT THE WORKSHOP OF KENNETH BURKE

WITH Kenneth Burke we enter the workshop of fiction and he shows us the structural elements of good stories functioning without concealment. There are certain mathematical propositions, psychological concepts, and problems in mechanics which can be best explained by a blackboard demonstration. In the case of Kenneth Burke's short stories—collected in 1924 in a volume entitled *The White Oxen and Other Stories* (A. and C. Boni)—something equivalent is really required, and that equivalent would be the reading aloud of the stories with pauses for the demonstrator to point out what the intention in this or that passage was and how knowingly it had been realized. Since that is not now feasible and since I cannot depend upon an acquaintance with the astonishing and suggestive stories of *The White Oxen,* even by those who write or study modern literature professionally, I shall have to resort to the usual makeshift of quoted fragments and plot-resumé.

By analysing three stories, "Olympians," "The Book of Yul," and "Prince Llan," I shall try to reveal the curve Burke mentions in his foreword. The stories "are arranged," he wrote, "approximately in the chronological order of their completion, and represent, it seems to me, a certain progression of method. In stressing one æsthetic quality we lose others. I see these stories as a gradual shifting of stress away from the realistically convincing and true to life; while there is a corresponding increase of stress upon the more rhetorical properties of letters." Let "Olympians" then stand for the "realistically convincing and true to life" period in this young writer's swift development. The opening bespeaks competence, but neither originality nor distinction.

"After the Wilsons moved from Edgewood, their house was left empty for nearly two months; at the end of this time, it was occupied by a Mr. Beck, who put a little black and gold sign in his window, 'J. J. Beck, Instructor in Music.' Also, Mr. Beck joined the Methodist Church on Braddock Avenue, and gave five dollars to the local ball team. When asked to become affiliated with the gymnasium, Mr. Beck said they were doing invaluable good towards the upbuilding of healthy American manhood, but that he personally was denied all violent exertion, owing to cardiac rheumatism. He gave full assurance of his moral support, however."

The author has straightway set out to establish on his pages a typical American village and an inconspicuous music teacher, and both characterizations are filled in and interlaced in the next five paragraphs. Mr. Beck, it appears, is excessively timid, or "fragile" as the community terms him, mainly because his love instincts receive only a solitary and sorry satisfaction. "All of which agitations culminated when he was teaching the Howardell's eldest daughter, little Dorothy, who was now nearly fifteen, and was his favourite pupil."

It is spring, and Mr. Beck flutters awkwardly and weakly while teaching Dorothy. "Mr. Beck understood fatally that she had not responded. . . . It was as though he were walking arm in arm with a midget."

Then they are returning from an opera, Dorothy trying to keep her eyes open and poor Mr. Beck recalling the *boldness* of the duet. "The car jerked and groaned through the deserted streets. And they passed dark houses, shutting away all manner of things; houses that stood out frankly and openly, but, within their walls, what slinking possibilities; houses with black corridors, with furniture and people in the shadows. These were sleeping houses, and as secret as caves."

The author has a grip on this story. He displays a sense of order and economy, and extracts from the trivial happenings some emotional significance by means of an unobtrusive irony. Doubtless he could have continued in this direction and achieved a certain degree of recognition as an able American "realistic" writer of fiction. But for Kenneth Burke such a story as "Olympians" was merely the sign of completing a course in his self-imposed and self-maintained academy, merely the proof that he had learned to use a fictional form nearest at hand. Now for departures and experiments!

Written in a blunt compact Swift-like style, "The Book of Yul" uses the mechanisms of dreaming for the purposes of abstract literary fantasy. By abstract, I mean that it is a fantasy devoid of applications to human problems and behaviour at large, a fantasy which illustrates almost nothing but a cool and moving design—like some machine constructed not for utility but simply because its principles and operation are beautiful to watch.

In approaching "The Book of Yul," it would be a good plan to translate the intellectual definitions in Aristotle's *Poetics* into terms of the emotions and the sensations, retaining always in mind that Aristotle stressed Plot (nowadays we say Structure) as the end and purpose of writing. Thus, "a beginning," Aristotle states, "is that which is not necessarily after anything else and which has naturally something else after it," which means to our senses and emotions that in his opening an author must evoke expectation, imminence, a feeling of something coming, an appetite for further development, just as a single dark cloud flying towards us from the horizon evokes an expectation of the ensuing storm. "The middle, that which is by nature after one thing and has another after it", demands a feeling of progression from one detail to another, a continuity or flow, an inevitable movement, not by any means the broken feeling of a string of episodes. It is the nature of the emotions to crave finality, and an end, "that which is naturally after something else, either as its necessary or usual consequent, and with nothing else after it," is devised to produce this response : all is over, nothing can follow.

These are the structural elements of a story : Beginning, Progression, and End, bound inexorably by transitions and arranged on a principle of *crescendo,* which manifests most strongly in the Progression. The writing, according to Burke, should always speak for the author as follows : "*Now* I am beginning," "*Now* I am conducting a transition", "*Now* I am progressing", and so on. And in "The Book of Yul" he has laboured to make no other statements than these, arranged in a set pattern.

"While waiting, two men carried on a conversation that flapped and fluttered like an old newspaper. And a third was silent. Finally, the conversation gained in intensity, culminating in some disagreeable figure or image. Whereat, the third man rose and left the room. With us following, for it is he who conceived of Yul and the eleventh city. Thus:

"Three men in a room, towards night" . . . and the first brief scene is now amplified. There is a desultory conversation: "Too late now, she'll be along any minute," says one man: a clock from somewhere sinks seven strokes into the room: a motor stalls outside and then goes on: overhead someone walks, "Thump, thump, THUMP louder . . . then THUMP, THUMP, thump fainter"; the stage, in brief, is set for the entrance of the lady. Then one of the men utters a disagreeable image and the third and silent man leaves the room to wander in a snowstorm.

The room and the two waiting men are wiped out of the story. The lady never arrives, but, as we shall see, the story does—a dream mechanism that is sometimes named a "transference." These properties, therefore, have their existence simply to signify: a story is on its way!

We follow the man in the snowstorm, who charges up an embankment in the park. "And the wind appearing before me, spook, speek, spike, spuck, SPAKE, 'Behold the eleventh citee.' And I, answering unto the wind, spook, speek, spike, spuck, SPAYACHE, 'Verily, verily do I behold the eleventh citee, for there are ten others buried beneath it. Gloria!'

"And then continuing to sing-song the *'Sic Erat,'* his mind wandered off to elaborate the eleventh city. 'It is in the bottom of the sea,' he thought, 'and lived in by extremely cultivated fishes.' "

But at this point Burke is through with this character since it has carried out the function of making a connexion between the beginning and the central progression, so Burke himself speaks: "But I happen to know that it is not at the bottom of the sea; or that it is not even near the sea." In this granite city there was a traveller named Yul and we shall now watch his curious adventures.

Yul does what any tourist in a strange city would do. He sees the sights, travelling at first on speeding platforms, and then on foot visiting an empty church. He becomes warm and restless, and, therefore, removes his clothing. "Then, listening with great intensity, he thought he could distinguish footsteps. They were far away, but hurrying. They would increase, then nearly fall away completely, so that Yul began to despair. But, finally, they became firmer; they were advancing; they were upon him . . . and down to one side of the altar he saw a form coming toward him.

"While it was still far off, Yul could already distinguish two eyes, which were like moist planets shined on by the sun. That is, they seemed to lie on the face, with an aggressive clearness; while they did not burn but had rather that quiet, steel-blue light of a planet. Of a moist planet, that is . . . not of some dry planets which are like a copper-red spark. Yul watched the eyes, as they came nearer to him like magnets.

"And as the form stood before him, Yul saw that it was the form of a woman; and at once he loved her clamorously. But she picked up the clothes which he had thrown off and held them out to him, so that Yul put them all back upon his body."

With what cunning, please observe in this passage, Burke has led us, whetting our anticipations and frustrating or delaying their satisfaction! The lady conducts Yul to the altar, they leap over a deep pit, and enter a labyrinth. "But of a sudden she stopped and opened her arms to him. Yul closed against her, looking into the roads and caverns of her eyes. She stepped away, tore back her garments with one fling of her hand . . . and Yul crumbled on the ground under the impact of his disgust. For shining out upon the hairs of the *mons Veneris,* there was a third eye, which beheld him steadily and without blinking."

But this is not the climax after all, for Yul wakes from his faint and threads his way back to the church where a service is now in motion. Now we ascend through a series of minor forms, each one climatic in character, such as the "Litany of Error," the sermon, and, finally, the crucifixion scene whose individual *crescendo* coincides with the intensest moment of the whole composition.

"The voice stopped; the priest's arms were stretched out in imitation of the agony of the cross; music broke out, while at the same time a shrieking rose to the right of the altar; silk streamers began dropping and twisting, played upon by lights of all colours. The college of priests hurried up before the altar, howling 'Glory, glory!' leaning forward and bearing the crosses of the nine crucified like banners. They stopped short before the pit; the music dropped away; the streamers subsided into a lazy billow; the lights became one penetrating reddish purple, which lay in all corners of the church like a sunset. The bodies of the nine crucified could be seen moving in silence on their crosses. . . The priest, from the summit of the altar, gave a signal with his hand, and the crosses with their burdens were dropped into the pit. For a time they could be heard, scraping now and then against the sides, or colliding with one another. Finally, as they reached the bottom of the lowest city, faint thumps came up out of the pit."

The end is now the problem, and it is solved by the mysterious march of the armless giants. You recall the thumps in the beginning and you note that they have recurred in a different manner as the crosses with their agonized burdens have bumped in their descent. Suddenly, these thumps are transposed—another dream mechanism, by the way—into an enormous treading of ascending giants while the congregation listens fearstruck. We are convinced without further demonstration that not only the eleventh city and Yul, but the story itself is doomed. After this irresistible march, *nothing,* one is positive, exists that before existed within the bounds of the tale.

In writing of Ben Jonson, T. S. Eliot made an interesting distinction between "creative fictions" and "critical fictions". Such a story as "The Book of Yul" might fittingly be termed a "creative fiction", for it in no sense criticizes or satirizes or explains life, but remains absolutely consistent with the special logic of its own world. Apart from its strongly built major form, it abounds in minor forms about which one can imagine studious craftsmen jotting observations in their notebooks. One device they could scarcely overlook, and that is the means taken to achieve the coolness of design which I mentioned. This effect of coolness is created by a succession of "long shots", by the numerous distant views that almost imply the use of a telescope. The account of the approach of Yul's lady, her eyes appearing from a distance like planetary lights, is illustrative of the "long shot", as are also such sentences as "the altar, seen far off through a cylinder of darkness, glowed with a soft phosphorescence."

Burke experimented with other stories written under the general æsthetic—art to display art—that governed "The Book of Yul", no two of which, however, were occupied with the identical problem, and rounded off his book with a new type of design, "Prince Llan," more static than the progressions he had hitherto written and more influenced by the current conceptions of painting. I am privileged to quote from a letter written by Kenneth Burke while composing "Prince Llan" :

"Here is why there is so much searching for a definition of form at the present time. Once the plot always centred around a conflict. The scene was set, the conflict began, the big moment was the drawing together of the threads. This was form. It is the form of all drama. In 'abstract' writing there is no conflict of this nature. The movement is usually a simple straight line or curving line. There is no conflict because *the plot is the hero;* and a plot either does things or does not—it cannot baffle itself, for even baffling itself is a simple plot. Thus, like Joyce, we must turn to the *Odyssey,* or some such, instead of to the tragedy (the psychological novel turned to the tragedy). A challenge-like beginning, and a coda end—and in between the main thing is diversity of attack, turning here and then there. With, of course, somewhat of a splurge right before the coda. Then one must devote his time to minor organisms, trying if possible to make each paragraph a microcosm, with its own formal development. But aside from the beginning, end, and coda, there are, it seems to me just now, no other major functions. The rest are simply *relationships between the parts,* such as ending a conversation chapter with some speechless act growing out of it, or following a letter with an image, and so forth. While, of course, the letter or the conversation should have gone through some still smaller curve in themselves." (My italics).

"Prince Llan," embellished with neat "program notes", is described by the sub-title as "An Ethical Masque in Seven Parts, Including a Prologue and Coda," the majority of these parts being related by qualities rather than by obvious progression. I shall not go further into its design than this—for after all the approach has been defined, the key given, the story is consummately managed, and the reader has his own gifts for appreciation. However, after glancing at Burke when he is theorizing and criticizing more formally than the extract from the letter shows, I should like to return to "Prince Llan" and inquire why he refers to it as "an Ethical Masque."

Burke appears to be destined to become one of the most formidable of American critics. He has trained himself to formulate exactly and clearly. He is equipped with a sensitive ear that enables him to differentiate subtly the rhythms of his prose. His sensibility throws up images or figures when they are needed—"nosing about the teat of classicism", "just as yeast, flourishing in the fruit mash, multiplies with ebullience and fervour, until, by its own processes, it has generated sufficient alcohol to kill it." These figures invariably enliven or flush the exposition, and, as illustrations, drive vividly into the reader's mind the ideas he has stated. He is in love with ideas. And he is clever: Mencken, he says, "has demonstrated the stupidity of many a stupidity and has invariably shown that it was stupid."

By picking up erudition as he moves along, he is increasing the power of his native endowments and working towards standards of literary excellence—based on Shakespeare, Racine, Goethe, and so on—standards that he may in time be able to objectify. When he is engaged in technical analysis, he is most expert: beyond that, he suffers from the distress caused by not having achieved a comprehensive point of view. Sometimes he is absolutist, sometimes relativistic, often he is merely uncomfortable as he shifts among the classical, neo-classical, and romantic attitudes towards life, always avoiding the religious viewpoint. This, I believe, arises from a personal dilemma which can be held up to view when we re-examine "Prince Llan."

But, though a comprehensive point of view has not been settled upon, Burke's æsthetic theory is consistent. In his paper on "The Correspondence of Flaubert" (*The Dial,* February, 1922), he maintains brilliantly that Flaubert "was trying by the exercises of processes which were primarily intellectual to write under an æsthetic whose processes were primarily intuitive." He argues that Flaubert, if he had been what he wanted *au fond* to be, namely, a thorough disciple of art for art's sake, would, if he were sowing a field in what he considered an arresting manner, have sown not seed but sand, since it was the process and not the result he was stressing. And it was precisely this bold step, which, if Burke be right, Flaubert missed, that the young American has taken in his short stories. In justification of this step or rather leap, Burke offers two essays, "The Poetic Process" (*The Guardian,* May-June, 1925) and "Psychology and Form," (*The Dial,* July, 1925).

These papers are keen, shrewd, subtle, ingenious, and complex: it is delicate work to condense them. If one may be permitted to adopt a textbook procedure and grieve for it, the essential propositions may be listed as follows:—

The Function of Art

"It is right that art be called a 'waking dream'. The only difficulty with this definition . . . is that to-day we understand it to mean art as a waking dream for the artist. . . It is, rather, the audience which dreams, while the artist oversees the conditions which determine this dream."

The Essence of Art

". . . form would be the psychology of the audience. Or, seen from another angle, form is the creation of an appetite in the mind of the audience, and the adequate satisfying of that appetite. . . . In information, the matter is intrinsically interesting. . . While it would, furthermore, be absurd to rule intrinsic interest out of literature. I wish simply to have it restored to its properly minor position, seen as merely one out of many possible elements of style . . . The method most natural to the psychology of form is eloquence . . . we have made three terms synonymous; form, psychology, and eloquence. And eloquence thereby becomes the essence of art, while pity, tragedy, sweetness, humour, in short, all the emotions which we experience in life proper, as non-artists, are simply the material on which eloquence may feed . . . Eloquence is simply the end of art, and is thus its essence."

The Poetic Process

"We can discuss the basic forms of the human mind under such concepts as *crescendo,* contrast, comparison, and so on. But to experience them emotionally, we must have them singularized into an example, an example which will be chosen by the artist from among his emotional and environmental experiences."

The Artists' Personal Process

"*The artists' means are always tending to become ends in themselves.* The artist begins with his emotion, he translates this emotion into a mechanism for arousing emotion in others, and thus his interest in his own emotion transcends into his interest in the treatment."

This is, of course, the purest æstheticism, and æstheticism, equally of course, is one aspect of romanticism. For all its discipline and order, æstheticism desires the same result as romanticism : emotional unity or integration achieved at the expense of a possible harmony and synthesis with the practical and intellectual functions of man. Waking dream . . . the adequate satisfying of emotional cravings by form . . . the individuating of the psychological principles governing the human being so that they may have emotive appeal . . . the artist losing his engrossment in his original subject-matter to become engrossed in its treatment which is designed to produce a waking dream : such is the circle of Burke's thought and each segment of it, one sees, touches only the responding emotions of the audience.

Let us grant immediately that he has dealt perspicaciously with one necessity of the literary artist, but are there not two necessities? The æsthete really starts with a very precarious assumption : that noble and reasonable and effective living, which depends on profound and accurate self-knowledge, is not the first value. He assumes instead that a good life is the multiplication of those satisfying emotional experiences which contact with works of art produces. In other words, he balances, or rather compensates for, the disorder, the unintelligibility, the tedium of much of his life by, as often as possible, creating or experiencing at least emotional integration in the ordered world of art. It may be, however, that the æsthete, disregarding potential development as he does, is merely childishly adjusting to circumstance and environment, quite asleep to the fact that the part of a man would be the effort to master life, beginning logically with a search for methods to achieve mastery. But let these assumptions lie, the second necessity can be established without going into them.

In his criticism of Gertrude Stein (*The Dial,* April, 1923) Burke wrote : "But Milton's line has something more than Miss Stein's. The significant form is backed by subject-matter, and this backing produces a heightened emotion . . . if form is sufficient to produce an emotion, subject-matter is required to heighten it. Art, that is, is a process of individualization ; form is general ; subject-matter is specific." Then he accuses Miss Stein of ignoring the inherent property of words : "that quality in the literary man's medium which makes him start out with a definiteness that the other Arts do not possess. That is, if the musician plays G-sharp he has prescribed no definitions; but, if the literary man writes 'boy', he has already laid down certain demarcations." This is a crevice in Burke's theory, but it lets in more than the theory can contain.

If words have definiteness, then it is an obligation for the user of them to ensure that his meanings are definite; that is, that his words have meanings that are objective. Many words, as a matter of easily ascertainable fact, refer to nothing. (E.g., "humanity" as used by the social reformer instead of "mankind," which can have real meaning). Many more words have at present only varying personal or subjective meanings. (E.g., will, soul, "God made Man in His Own Image," love, and so on.) The most that we can do as writers, until some means is found of giving objectivity to our experience, is to formulate as precisely as possible our *subjective* meanings, but these subjective meanings are conditioned by what we individually are. Thus, the writer's bias, temperament, defects, attitudes, preferences, dislikes, exclusions, private psychology creep into his work with almost every word he employs.

But what is more, even an æsthete purposes to make his subject-matter heighten the formal effect. In his choice of subject he is limited by the range of his own experience, he is guided by its nature, and he is subject to its defects. Thus, as in the case of Burke's stories, the reader has data, perhaps unwittingly presented, for forming opinions about the author: his attitude toward women, the correctness of his characterizations, the immaturity or maturity of his emotional reactions, the quality and inclusiveness of his understanding, and a thousand more deductions from his behaviour as a writer.

So, if the first necessity of the literary artist is objectivity and consciousness concerning form, the second necessity is objectivity and consciousness concerning subject-matter. If the literary artist refuses to recognize the second necessity, the result inevitably will be that, while he is designedly making some effects, he is at the same time unconsciously producing other effects which may vitiate his whole effort to conquer the reader. Consequently, Burke's endeavour to make form the major element in art is simply the endeavour to choose between two necessities, which is impossible, as mathematicians apparently know better than artists.

It is a grave mistake to lean on Aristotle alone. On the other side, there is Socrates, particularly apropos our discussion, the Socrates who speaks on composition in Plato's *Phaedrus*. Taken together, they cover both the necessities presiding over literature, whether critical or creative.

To return at last to the Ethical Masque, "Prince Llan," there we discover Burke trying with some measure of desperation to observe the two necessities. For, in its highly fantastic way, this story gives a series of variations on the theme of monism, a series of disruptions by warfare between the head, the heart, and the solar plexus (intellect, emotions, and instincts), and a conclusion that upholds an ingenious dualism and cites a "perfect" cycle of human activity based upon this dualism—followed, however, by the gesture of a fictitious suicide of the author at beholding his solution. There is a good deal in this story that is profound or, at least, has the potentiality of being profound, but the dualism at its close does not appear to me to require very serious treatment.

What it amounts to is a theory of balance of parts. Man, in Burke's perfect cycle, simply lives in one part after another, but always as a fragment. That is, he works on his farm, giving his instinctive demands the "right of way"; he reads his books in the evening to satisfy his intellectual curiosities; he enjoys the silhouette of the black hills at night and goes to his wife emotionally alive. This Burke calls "a dualism at one with itself, a dualism not of strife but of mutual completions, a dualism of systole and diastole." The theory, however, reckons without the psychological nature of man who does, indeed, live fragmentarily, but by the same token lives as far as he is unconcerned without control. And, unless there is control, how can the parts be balanced? To participate in each activity of a day's cycle as a whole man implies on the other hand control and control means more than a dualism of balanced contestants: it means a harmony of the many regulated by the one.

But will Burke work in the directions we have been indicating? All that can be said now is that he is pulled one way by romantic æstheticism and pulled another way by neo-classical yearnings, the yearning for some *concensus omnium bonorum,* some racial faith, some group of commonly accepted assumptions, upon which he might rest untroubled by scepticism. But alas!

the authorities that might serve for a contemporary neo-classicism do not exist to-day. The result for Burke is tension of a disagreeable character, for he does not want to be philosophic and he is too intelligent to remain an æsthete. And, as yet, his friendship for the views of Oswald Spengler has solved nothing.

But, whatever the outcome of his present conflict, this, at least, can always be said of him : he writes an excellent prose, he has made important laboratory researches and discoveries in the art of composing fiction, and he is a fine resistant type of critic. The last is no mean function to perform in an era of new programs, and the whole is no slight achievement for one who is still under thirty.

GORHAM B. MUNSON.

THE APOLOGY FOR YAHOOS

GULLIVER is all very well as an anthropologist, he had genius, but he wrote before the observation of primitive races had been developed into a science. His generalizations are very open to error, as he lacked the knowledge of a rigorous method of cross-checking, such as that perfected by the Cambridge school for penetrating the private lives of primitive folk. Gulliver might even have found inapposite that spirit of devotion to an abstract ideal, to the ideal of certified scientific statements, which will impel an educated gentleman to spend hours crouching in thorny scrub (like a Christian martyr in his burning bush) simply to decide whether the Fuzzy-wuzzies turn themselves N.N.E. or N.N.W. when urinating.

It is chiefly in his description of the two races inhabiting the island of Scatophilos, the Yahoos and the Houyhnhnms, that the critics have discovered inaccuracies, and this may be accounted for by his unreasonable prejudice, which is quite unworthy of a disinterested lover of truth, against the subordinate race. Dr. Samuel Johnson even goes so far as to assert that these accounts were written "in open defiance of truth and regularity", but we cannot admit so strict a censure when we know that Gulliver lived for a considerable period on the island and enjoyed exceptional opportunities for studying the people, great and small, in their unsophisticated state and whilst unaware that they might be observed. No, we must attribute his defects, first, to a lack of method and, then, to that atrabilious temperament which never allowed him to respond to the suggestions of beauty and natural affection. As regards his insensitiveness to beauty, an editor of his works has actually established his complete ignorance of the part played by the Fine Arts—that greatest of civilizing influences—in the spiritual existence of the yahoos; for he classifies virtuosos, or, as we should call them now, artists, among "bawds, attornies, ravishers, and pickpockets."

I can only refer here to one or two of the many apologists who have come forward in defence of what might almost be called our common humanity. It should be noticed that the epithet most commonly applied to Fielding's ideal yahoo creation, Tom Jones, is *manly*. On the other hand, Thackeray's character of Richard Steele, by pointing out the existence of sentimental refinement in this apparently grossly selfish and timidly sensual nature, has done much to reserve him a place in the sympathy we bestow on the weak, the dirty, and the irresponsible.

So, though I do not claim to be the first to put in a good word for a shockingly misjudged people, I do assert that my study, when it is complete, will be such a vindication of this amiable and unpretentious race that we shall not hear any more about the mythical virtues of the houyhnhnms, the insufferable prigs on whom Gulliver heaped all the fulsome and even sycophantic eulogy of which he defrauded the humble yahoo.

It will be remembered that the last houyhnhnm died a few years ago in one of our magnificent metropolitan asylums for the insane, and, though the carcase, properly dried and eviscerated has been placed in the Museum, it is clear that the only reliable source of our information about this extinct people must be the historical researches and the criticism of their hereditary enemies, the yahoos themselves. After the opening up of Scatophilos, which followed Gulliver's accidental discovery, the yahoos showed themselves much more sensitive to European ideas than their quadruped tyrants, who ultimately paid the penalty for their inability to adapt themselves to the new conditions. It appears from the arguments of the brilliant school of historians instituted when the yahoos seized the reins of state about one hundred and twenty years ago that the houyhnhnms had been in a decadent condition for many centuries. As they studiously concealed from Gulliver the existence of their literature ("all their knowledge is traditional," he says), he had no material on which to base a comparative judgment, and this must be supposed to excuse his preposterous veneration for a race content to consider its evolution complete when it still existed in a state devoid of all civilized amenities.

From the studies which the younger yahoos have made of the ancient texts of the houyhnhnms, it seems to be pretty well established (though the significance of certain abstract terms remains to be defined) that, for the last three thousand years of their existence, they suffered from the delusion that their most spiritually exalted individuals were those in whom the idea of perfection reached the pitch of urgency and rendered worldly delight and even the joys of fellowship utterly insipid to their fantastic and uncharitable tastes. This vice was very far from infecting even the partly brutalized yahoos observed by Gulliver, suffering though they were from generations of the cruellest slavery, for he frequently describes them as he had seen them in the ardent and unaffected enjoyment of the few pleasures left them. Such a vignette as that of the yahoo devouring the lump of putrid asses' flesh refused by Gulliver is in striking contrast to the joyless vegetarianism of the effete autocrats.

A vigorous propaganda was put in motion as soon as the yahoos acquired the faculty of articulate expression, and many volumes of their works may be consulted in which the subversive paradoxes of the degenerate houyhnhnms are categorically refuted. These writings inculcate a spirit of courageous self-assertion, of hope, energy, progress, complacence, and tolerance, and an example may not be out of place here. A houyhnhnm had propounded a series of maxims in which the contradictions of the earthly state, contrasted with this idea of perfection they had, was made the excuse for many morbid and unsociable conclusions. He envisaged the individual as if lost in a remote corner of the universe without help or guidance as to his conduct in this world or his fate in the next. "Contemplating this condition," he says, "I am seized with terror like one who has been carried on to a desert island whilst he slept and who awakes without knowing where he is and without any means of escape, so that I wonder how one does not fall into desperation at such a miserable condition."

To which the spirited and travelled yahoo replies,

"For my part, when I observe Pom or Loobstck, I see no reason for falling into that state of desperation of which our author speaks; I see a city which in no way resembles a desert island, but one which is opulent, well-policed, and where the inhabitants are as happy as their nature comports. What reasonable person would despair because he does not comprehend the nature of his thought, because he knows only some few of the attributes of matter, because God has not revealed his secrets to him? One should equally despair at not having four legs and a pair of wings. Why should we be horrified at our condition? Our existence is not so despicable as some would have us believe.''

These are brave words and they are not empty ones, as any one who has had the privilege of living as long as I have in several of their cities will agree. Gulliver's observation that the yahoos ''appear to be the most unteachable of all animals, their capacities never reaching higher than to draw or carry burdens'' is most obviously contradicted by the evidence these places afford. I do not refer to such professions as those of Cabinet Minister, literary journalist, or sanitary inspector, though it is obvious that all these are the creation of a superior intelligence, of one which ought to be called human rather than animal, but to the common occupations and amusements of the middle sort of people. Here is a list of some of those which lead to fame, fortune, or civic approbation :

Chiropodist, scavenger, sandwichman, toilet-paper manufacturer, clairvoyant, hangman, broker, chucker-out, justice of the peace, pip-carver in jam factory, bum, satirist, man-about-town, *imagiste,* lay preacher, gentlemen's corset maker, butler, major-general, commissionaire, shop-walker, bishop, private detective, sporting peer, charity worker, strike-breaker, film censor, socialist millionaire, auntie, contortionist, poet, publicity agent, anthologist, hanger-on.

Their various amusements would present an almost more imposing list, but, as it is exceptionally difficult for an outsider to comprehend the nature of the enjoyment they derive from the ingenious pursuit of trivialities, I must defer this list till I can deal at length with the psychology of the yahoo at play.

In the meantime, I can give some particulars of their domestic ideals from a chapter of my forthcoming volume, *The Idea of an Earthly Paradise,* in which I examine the vast quantities of material I have gathered on this subject from the quasi-sacred writings which have replaced the archaic mundane literature of the houyhnhnms, the advertisement pages of their periodical publications.

The fundamental constituent of their ideal existence is a kennel, generally of brick, sometimes treated so as to resemble stone or wood, and sometimes of corrugated iron. This building may vary in size from one containing two or fewer small compartments to one of fifty or more, but all such distinctions are merged in the term *home* which is always applied to the places where the yahoos breed. This appears to be the difference between the largest kennels and the *hotels,* which they use in common, for, though couples voluntarily resort to the latter for intimate approaches, they are never, unless by accident, the scenes of parturition.

It is the ambition of the male yahoo to persuade a female of the species to occupy this *home* with him and to accord him her favours exclusively, without exceptions even in the case of his warmest friends, either for the propagation of offspring or for their mutual delight. When the female agrees spontaneously to this arrangement she is said to be *in love with* this particular yahoo.

The idea of love is the one most discussed among the yahoos and there are a hundred controversies as to its real nature. An extreme but very popular school affirms that this idea is peculiar to the yahoos and differentiates them from all the rest of the animal creation. This view is based on the fact that the yahoo is, ideally, monogamous, a virtue which does not extend to any other of the lower animals with the possible exception of the whale. To decide this important point they have just fitted out a marine expedition which will shoot silver arrows, marked with an identification number, into all the pairing whales they come in range of. Next year they will kill all the pairing whales bearing these arrows and observe if the numbers still correspond. There is, however, a modern and rising school of empiricists who claim that love is not actually monogamous, (and they have obtained a good deal of experimental evidence for this view), and even that it is not a desirable ideal, the better thing being always to conform to natural instincts; this is known as the intellectual school.

There are many shades of opinion between these extremes, but all are united in an unshakeable belief in the superiority of love to hatred. Love is beautiful, they say, hatred is ugly, and they are never tired of contrasting the benign expression of contented lovers with the distorted mask of gratified evil. Love delights to share its pleasure in youth and in old age its consolation, but hatred remains aloof and solitary, and its self-sufficiency falls like a reproach over the prostrate couples.

Before concluding this hasty sketch of the subject, I should like to put in a word for the extreme decency with which the yahoos conduct their discussions of these matters and the practical details of mating. Although the intentions of the pair are known for months ahead in the better sort of families, they permit none of those discreet jocularities, those oblique references to the physiological functions such as sometimes disgrace our publications. Their superior newspapers have trained observers whom they send out to describe for the common delight the coupling ceremony known among them as the *wedding*. But, as the utmost decorum prevails throughout the ritual, so I assure my readers the printed account will let fall no hint that a more than friendly arrangement has been concluded. This shame, for I cannot call it fear, of the physical is associated with an idea which is the second of the great triumvirate on which the stability of the yahoo *home* is based. This is Luxury, which, with Love and Law, is the mainstay of their universe, for, symbologically, because their metaphysic is matriarchal, they identify the universe with *home*. Luxury with them is not what it was with the decadent bourgeois of Greece and Rome, a means of intensifying or subtilizing the sensations, but simply the process of eliminating the physical reminders of their animal origin. As a proverb of theirs has it "Mum's the word," or as the canonical *Home Journal,* Vol. 43, No. 6, Page 182, expands the phrase,

"Mum is the word! It is so simple to use 'Mum,' the snow-white cream deodorant. A touch to the underarm, and where-ever perspiration is closely confined, assures you that no matter how much you may perspire throughout the day and evening, there can be no unpleasant, unfeminine odour to detract from your charm.

"The use of 'Mum' is not mere fastidiousness. It is a matter of good breeding and common sense.

" 'Mum' is 25cs. and 50cs. at stores."

The houyhnhnms had a very discouraging idea called original sin, which involved the conception of a fall from grace or perfection. A distinctive contribution of the yahoos to international culture is the identification of original sin with the fact of the animal origin of their species, so that fashionable luxury and intellectual awareness, remedies easily disseminated in rich modern democracies, have replaced the old, laborious methods of spiritual regeneration of the individual. Luxury supplies the necessary motive for this reform and, though the female was in the old days the snare of damnation as well as the mother of the Saviour, now she is solely the single instrument of salvation. The effort of the males to create the luxury that is to erase the bar sinister from the yahoo escutcheon is stimulated and intensified by the females' incessant rivalry in luxurious display. Unsullied with passion for luxury itself or for discrimination between its forms (for any evaluation of forms would necessitate a regression to the exploded metaphysic of the absolute), their unrelenting jealousy is the humble instrument which has lifted the yahoo from the cave to the hut, from the maisonnette to the villa, from a furry hide to artificial silk and superfluous hair. Still further improvements are expected in the near future.

If Love creates the yahoo home and Luxury adorns it, it is Law that secures it. Of all his inventions, Law is the one the true yahoo contemplates with inexhaustible satisfaction. Law is based on the idea of justice, of which they recognize two distinct varieties: one pertaining to the relations between the yahoos themselves and the other involving their relations with Providence.

The more intelligent of the modern yahoos are convinced that, by this time, the indifference of the universe to yahoo emotions has been amply proved, and they are naturally very impatient of their poetical writers who attribute joy, grief, hope, despair, rage, and benevolence to the vegetable, geological, and meteorological features of the landscape. Piety is by no means extinct among them and even their sceptics recognize that in the face of undeserved catastrophe criticism must be superseded by resignation.

If this is as it ought to be,
My God, I leave it unto thee,

concludes the eloquent author of a poem "On an Infant Yahoo Dying before its First Meal", which is one of the gems in their national anthology.

The non-sectarian yahoos have a deity which they call the Whole or whole, which must not be confused with *hole* meaning an empty space. The Whole is an entelechy in which all opposites are reconciled, though, of course, without ceasing to be opposites. The expression of this state, in which they apprehend what is called the ‘‘Wholeness of the Whole’’, generally approaches the condition of music, that is to say, it is non-conceptual, but here and there a flash of intuition illuminates their literature, such as this,

> Transcending self, myself becomes
> The larger self that moves the whole.

This kind of enthusiasm is very popular among them as it is always at the command of those who have no more immediate satisfactions. I shall have more to say about this when I describe their ideas of æsthetics. I shall also have something to say about their Practical Justice, which is quite distinct from Providential Justice, being designed to protect the weak against the strong. Within its protecting circle, the delicate flowers of culture, honour, and virtue enjoy a perpetual summer. In what these ideas consist we shall explain at length, for without an understanding of their meaning the yahoo psychology cannot be appreciated at its true value.

JASPER BILDJE.

NOTES AND REVIEWS

WHERE IS BRITAIN GOING?*

Apart from its merely political significance, Trotsky's book is of the greatest value as a clear-sighted direct attack on the manner of thinking which characterizes this country. It is not alone the politicians that reveal the bewildering hypocrisy of thought which he so fiercely and adroitly lashes. On every side, the slug humanitarianism leaves its slimy trail, obscuring the function of intelligence and atrophying emotion—and it is only such politics as can assure the demolition of the existing ideology that are of interest. Trotsky is the most authoritative spokesman of the party whose aim is professedly this. Much of this pamphlet is taken up with masterly polemic, he has no equal in this country in the art of political exposition and abuse, but it is much more than this. In an introduction, Brailsford draws attention to this power, but even while attempting to remain open-minded he betrays the inherent conservative limitations of his nationality. He admits the justice of some, at least, of Trotsky's attacks on British Socialism, yet adds, "But the odds are that, with these ruthless Russian methods, he will produce in the minds of most English readers an effect which is far from his intention." It is obviously this very unwillingness to change which Trotsky is combating. In the second, third, and fourth chapters he is at pains to emphasize the deep natural affinities between Baldwin's "gradualness" and MacDonald's "pacific evolution." They are both democrats, the one attempting to fill the relationship of benevolent father, the other that of earnest elder brother, to the proletariat. Each is a mask, though unconsciously and unwillingly, for the real aims of his party. Both play with the idea of force, but only as a tactical bogey, for, on the common ground of mild culture, cricket, and downright British common sense, they meet each other with respect and fraternally. Mr. Baldwin's recent address to the Classical Association provides an amusing counterpart to Mr. MacDonald's activities as Socialist poet, which Trotsky so strongly denounces : "A sober and timorous curmudgeon, in whom there is as much poetry as in a square inch of felting, endeavours to dumbfound the world with Shakespearian grimaces." Most of the Labour leaders suffer the same castigation. Thomas is this "absolutely unprecedented lackey," Mrs. Snowden "the unqualified midwife" of the Fabian Labour Movement, and the "left-wingers" Wheatley, Kirkwood, etc., are not spared. Their ripostes to the Soviet leaders, implying Christian indignation and horror at those naughty, wicked Russians, are less effective than the chorus of hoarse-throated colonels and toadying M.P.s who sing from the left-hand page of *The Daily Mail.* It is noticeable that the Communist journalists in England unwisely forego the use of this very powerful weapon of ridicule, but this is, perhaps, because the party which has finally disclaimed collaboration with the I.L.P. is as yet too limited or too well-brought-up. But, apart from pyrotechnics, Trotsky's analysis of the contemporary position in England is impressive because of the concise way in which he orientates the facts of our history to the central thesis of revolution. There may be flaws in his historical deductions, but the recent fiasco emphasizes the justice of his prognostications as to the way in which the real issues would be forced to the surface. The opinion most favourable to revolution at present is, as he foretold it would be, that expressed by *The Daily Mail* and *Morning Post.* While the I.L.P.'s journal continues to mouth the platitudes of democracy, they express baldly and savagely one side of the class warfare. This attitude is illogical, or at least insincere, because they profess to favour peaceful development but, now that they have been forced into a more downright position, the violence of their antagonism is explicit. Whether or not there exists a proletarian party to take advantage of the position remains to be seen, for it is obvious, as Trotsky points out, that for the purposes of revolution a very deep distinction exists between a proletariat and a proletarian party. This is a question of the greatest importance from the point of view of culture. The answer to it will decide whether England—and, if Trotsky is right in his opinion of her importance, whether Europe—is to stay on the road of continually degenerating values, or to create a revolution as vital, potentially, as the inception of Christianity. The parallel between this age and the second century has been sufficiently often pointed out, but, if there is to be a new influx of vigour into Europe such as then began, the steps taken to assure it must be at least as violent. If revolution is to bring any rejuvenescence of values, it must be complete and, therefore, taken out of the hands of parliamentary and political squabblers. It is this view which Trotsky develops here in particular relation to England.

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* *A translation of this pamphlet has recently been published by Messrs. Allen, Unwin, & Co., 1/6.*

EUTHANASIA: OR THE FUTURE OF CRITICISM.

English literature has never given a very long run to any one of the absolutes which critics like Jonson, Johnson, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats attempted to construct. But these names alone are evidence enough that our best criticism has been written within the shadow of a formulated æsthetic. The empirical habit of mind of a Chaucer or a Locke dominates English achievement, but, so far as criticism influences the direction of imaginative work, it does so in ways which counteract that tendency whilst acting as its auxiliary. A good critic is one who helps the creative situation. The most valuable criticism of the past has been that which, directly or by implication, limited the contemporary writer's freedom of choice in form or subject-matter. Certain modes of expression, expansions of a certain nature, certain states of being, even, may be shown up by the critic as false developments of a preceding tradition, and taboo, therefore, to writers who might otherwise waste energy in experimental blind-alleys. That is all the critic can contribute to the constructive movement of literature, and, apart from this possibility, he is only an educationalist, having no part in the dynamic of the art he writes about. In this, his ordinary capacity, he can be tested by all sorts of standards, moral, social, criminal, personal. Perhaps the most useful are those which judge the critic by his ability to prepare the public beforehand to appreciate the ascendant writers : to create the suitable groups of readers, ripe, discontented, snobbish or heroic, as propaganda- or contagion-centres.

The characteristics of a healthy criticism are invariably "classic", tending towards an ever greater rigidity of principle, organizations more explicit, and the canalization of the wide, shallow stream of taste. A bird's-eye view of criticism at the present day—its mechanism and conventions, not its exceptional individuals—shows a panorama of unbelievable muddle, futility, perversion. It is not the external conditions that are to blame. Everybody realizes that, with the increase in the popularization of literature, its dissemination comes under the same control, economic and political, that governs the distribution of foodstuffs. With few exceptions, only with varying degrees of compromise, the journals concerned follow the "commercial necessity" of deferring about their choice of review-books, about the length—and often the tone—of the reviews, to the neighbouring columns of publishers' advertisements. The integrity of individual criticism, of course, does not suffer directly from the mechanism to which it ministers; though the usual literary supplement has no right to the title it boasts, since the non-literary design to which the parts are subordinated is bound to violate the proper literary proportions, and the purely receptive reader carries away a wrong general impression, a false lesson in values. Perhaps a more noteworthy result of the popularizing-mechanism is its effect on the critic-popularizer. From Dryden to Jeffery, and from Jeffery to Mr. Squire, are two big jumps; and the conclusion cannot be avoided that literary representatives of the people degenerate as the constituency increases.

These features of the situation have nothing to do with criticism. Their setting is the "educational," and only a Social Revolution can deal with them. The real corrupters of literary criticism are the Mensheviks of our transitional period—a party whose intellectual snobbishness holds them aloof from the commercialized "educationalists"; who, nevertheless, are soaked in the very same philosophy of equivocation. This attitude takes various forms and covers a large area of very respectable print. Its distinguishing marks are a confusion of social with literary qualities; a hatred of unqualified statements; a hunger for "personal touches"; an ambition to extend a welcome to "all sorts" of writing, ostensibly out of a desire for comprehensiveness, really with the motive to justify a mixed standard; finally, an over-insistence on the empirical nature of our present æsthetic judgments.

In the reaction against the fixed universe of the Victorians, empirico-individualism was an important instrument of liberation. It has now become the sceptre of a tyranny even more hypocritical than the one it overthrew. It is not easy to decide which is the more complacent, the inelegant queen or her incubus, Mr. Strachey, in his guise of mocking Pierrot claiming privilege of a floury tear. The refined journalistic world, which is the special province of the Mensheviks, is run on petty-protestant lines: "Impressionism for all, and death to the primacy of abstractions". Not but that abstractions are in common use among them; but they are manipulated, sometimes with considerable skill, in a game of tactics of which the end, the ideal aim, is some "personal point of view".

A class of people is justly studied in its freaks, as psychoanalysis has done much to prove. But the investigator will have to be iron-nerved indeed, faced with the mountainous *trivia* of elegants like Mr. Humbert Wolfe, who are irresistibly moved to give anecdotes of their school pals, their recent travels, visits to their aunts, etc., while being "delighted" or "rather depressed" by a book under review. The foibles of reviewers may have documentary interest for the student of humble life, but they should be discouraged from straying away from their modest niches in the museum of sociological phenomena. Mr. Wolfe's style of criticism is merely a *reductio ad absurdum* of the prevailing habit; he is so ingenuous as to supply personal back-references to his literary "impressions". But a shabby response is just as naked when it is pushed forward into the cloud-cuckoo land of respectable abstractions, as almost any issue of *The Times Literary Supplement* will show. Admirable pieces of criticism appear occasionally in this journal, sprouting briefly out of a bog of moral muddle. But to its normal mood Mr. F. L. Lucas is "A Relentless Critic" and "a doctrine, by losing in definiteness, often gains in plausibility".

The literary problem at the present time is eminently a critical one, but, while recognizing a few grateful exceptions, the writer has to take over this functional activity from its professionals and make it part of his organic development. Such appropriations have, of course, occurred before; to a greater or lesser degree they are inevitable, and have proved to be beneficial.

But a conscious extremism seems to be indicated as the best move under present conditions: an attitude which may, incidentally, bring about some strange provisional changes in the technique of criticism. For instance, it is no longer useful to distinguish between an act of imagination and an act of criticism, where the first may, for all real purposes, be demoded by the second. Thus it is possible to say that the criticism in Mr. Eliot's "Sacred Wood" not only is a more valuable work than Mr. Lawrence's latest novel, but takes precedence of it, makes it obsolete. Such principles, based on an idea of progression, would be evil if not applied autonomously; that is, with a full realization that they derive exclusively from the art on which they bear. As it is, they could not pretend to the universal validity of first-principles. Their provisional status would be grounded and restrained in the knowledge that, while the imaginative activity continues to include all that is valuable in the critical, the rest of criticism is simply a matter of politics.

THE LAUTREAMONT AFFAIR.

A good deal of the emotional energy which would have been absorbed, in an age of religious faith, by the exercises of religion, the formulation of doctrine, or the criticism of heresies is to-day discharged through the medium of literary theory. A parallelism with the early stages of a new cult is apparent in recent poetic propaganda in France; the fulfilment of a prophecy—the theory of the psychology of the unconscious; the possession of certain sacred writings in which the prophecy is anticipated by revelation (i.e., by inspiration, sheer genius or some such other term) and of which the signification is not so clear that it prevents the divination of hidden or esoteric truths. And if, in order to equate literature with religion, it is necessary to balance an unknown quantity (an illogic, or super-logic) against the divine mysteries, it is no less essential to approach the sacred ground with the slippers of reason balanced on the devotee's head.

There is a strong tincture of mediaeval hagiolatry in the number of *Le Disque Vert* consecrated to Isidore Ducasse, self-styled comte de Lautréamont. M. Soupault owes to him a kind of conversion, which he records with the circumstantiality of Augustine: "J'étais couché dans un lit d'hôpital lorsque je lus pour la première fois les *Chants de Maldoror*. C'était le 28 juin. Depuis ce jour—là personne ne m'a reconnu. Je ne sais plus moi-même si j'ai du cœur." He prostrates himself in an ecstacy of contrition and humility: "Toi, Isidore, tu n'as rien oublié, et je veux tout à coup me confondre en excuses, en palinodies. Je veux être ton humble pédicure. . . ."

M. Supervielle is also possessed by the presence of the defunct:—

J'avais honte de mon cœur où coulait le sang des vivants,

> Alors que tu es mort depuis 1870 et privé du liquide séminal
> Et tu prends la forme d'une vague pour faire croire que ça t'est égal.

M. Crevel would salute Lautréamont with "un hymne de reconnaissance digne de lui". It would seem sacrilegious (the term is significant) "d'essayer une mosaïque de cailloux critiques autour de Maldoror". M. Dermée attributes to Lautréamont the presence of another string in the lyre of the modern poet, "une corde de pendu par amour de la vie"; and he, too, concludes in religious terminology, "nous tous, poètes d'aujourd'hui, plus nombreux que des poux, nous l'en remercions en de longues prières".

Lautréamont, M. Pierre-Quint tells us "découvre le procédé de l'écriture automatique : la plume note, sans l'intervention de la conscience, les associations d'idées ou d'images. Les phrases se déduisent, les unes des autres sans aucun plan préconçu, sans aucune préméditation logique, sous le seul effet de l'inspiration." We have read some work admittedly produced on this plan, and it was neither more nor less tedious than, say, a translation from Tagore. But it bore no resemblance to Lautréamont's work. Lautréamont collapses when he cannot bring his dream material into consciousness. When he can do so, he realizes some magnificent visions. His comparisons are frequently apt;

> Dans un moment d'égarement je pourrais te prendre les bras, les tordre comme un linge dont on exprime l'eau, ou les casser avec fracas comme deux branches sèches.

This is neither abnormal nor very remarkable. In fact, it does not need a new dispensation to account for his qualities, though one may be necessary to glorify his defects, the confusion, the rhodomontade, the grandiosity of anguish. M. Hytier is not quite just when he writes : "Je renonce à faire quelques remarques sur le génie de Rimbaud et l'impuissance de Lautréamont, parce qu'on ne recourt pas à un archange pour terrasser un gnome bossu", but MM. Gide and Cocteau accept much too complacently the spiritual equivalence of these two. Some less responsible enthusiasts even make up a trio—by adding Baudelaire.

Much of his originality is only superficial, a reminiscence of romantic reading, as M. Hytier points out, including the shoddiest works of the English school of terror.

But the most telling accusation is that of M. Malraux, who has compared the 1868 edition of the first *Chant* with that of 1874, and found, among other things, that Lautréamont replaced all the abstractions, the spirit of good, the spirit of evil, etc., with "the names of objects or with the names of animals which had no logical connexion with the poem."

"Puis, il relut son œuvre, et en tira une esthétique : à partir du 4e chant, il transpose son sujet et écrit sur la transposition."

M. Malraux instances the section on mathematics where the subject is transposed to a number of virgins, and the scene where God flays a boy in a brothel, which is narrated by a hair which had been left behind. A romantic of 1830, the critic says, would have had Satan wrenching the eyes out of pallid maidens, and it would have been their souls which complained of the outrage. "Lautréamont was the first to strike out *Satan* and *soul* and write over them *God* and *hair,*" and it should be added *boy* for *girl.* He concludes "même lorsqu'il donne des résultats aussi curieux, quelle est la valeur littéraire d'un procédé?"

From the literary standpoint the process is justified by the contemporary reaction. The modern is thrilled by these simple transpositions because his psychology is not very distinct from that of the 1830 romantic—only his literary snobism will not let him enjoy Mathurin, Lewis, Ossian, Young, Borel, and Bertrand, and the idea-associations are a little changed. Lautréamont left a mark of his intense exasperation which will not be wiped out for some time, but what are we to think of a state of mind for which this suffices to give literature a new direction and the pretensions of a cult? The phenomenon goes far beyond the bounds of a legitimate enthusiasm for an underrated talent. It is an attempt to stampede a timid literary public into the private stockade of a few theorists, whose creed is a novel and obviously not ineffective medley of flattery and coercion.

VERSE.

CONFESSIO JUVENIS. By RICHARD HUGHES. CHATTO and WINDUS, 6/-.

The traditional supremacy of verse is more seriously threatened by recent achievements in prose than it ever was by the polemics of the free verse movement. Verse has not been able to retain that immediacy in the expression of reality which has been its essential quality in the past, and poetic theory has rather flattered its tendency to easy emotional gratification through uncurbed phantasy. Prose, on the other hand, in various lesser currents and supremely in the "foul chaos"* of *Ulysses,* has realized contacts which had not previously been possible outside the field of influence generated by regularly rhythmic control. In Mr. Joyce's prose the concept achieves its maximum vitality, whereas in most modern verse it exists as an anæmic parasite.

Verse is unnecessary for a great many purposes for which it is used from the inertia of habit, but it would be an assumption to suppose that verse was not still the most powerful instrument for certain narrowly defined ends . . . which would not be by any means trivial ends, word gymnastics or amorous im-

* *I have seen this immortalizing phrase attributed to Sir Edmund Gosse—how unjustly I do not know.*

becilities, but as it were quintessential ends, of which one is envisaged in *The Waste Land,* without its rather needless realistic episodes.

The direct rivalry of prose should stimulate the writing of genuine verse for plainly such a very vigorous competitor cannot be met with obsolete strategy. Which of the various new tendencies in technique will finally predominate cannot usefully be discussed, but a movement towards an economy of means seems to be definitely established.

A writer in *The Times Literary Supplement,* however, complains that "there is a constant intellectual teasing to have verse approach the current use and enunciation of words." It is this teasing, overcome but never annihilated by the stronger verbal sensibility of the poet, that has kept our poetry, to the extent it is, pure and vital. Any movement towards poetic creation contains two elements, a reaction against the unintellectual use of a debased poetic idiom, an effort to re-define the content of words; and the creation of a new idiom (which in its turn will be debased and destroyed) not referable to the immediate intellectual obligations of language.

It is an accident of the time, a limitation that must be admitted, that there is at present more evidence of the first of these processes being at work than the second. The verse of Mr. Hughes is an example to the point, it is purged of the grosser emotional conventionalities, for a rather laborious virility. But, in the creation of a style, he shows little personal sensibility. Was it not Mr. Robert Graves who, in an unguarded moment, loosed on us this trotting stanza, of which "*Confessio Juvenis*" contains several specimens:

Robin stark dead on twig,
    Song stiffened in it:
Fluffed feathers may not warm
    Bone-thin linnet.

"Glaucopis" is a tragedy in jingle which is comic in its affected economy of language. There is a mock concision as well as a false exuberance in poetic style:

John Fane Dingle
    By Romney Brook
Shot a crop-eared owl,
    For pigeon mistook.

The longer pieces are more accomplished. "The Rolling Saint," "Unicorn Mad," and the two odes on "Vision" have a metrical dexterity which is quite uncommon. But here the actual poetic content, realized experience, seems very small in proportion to the verbal energy expended in the elaboration of a rather commonplace metaphysical proposition. A public claim to vision, to a perception of the very structure of the universe ought to be backed up by something less trite than these literary lucubrations,

Naked of words alone we pass :
We hang our names upon a tree,
Pile epithets upon the grass
In useless heaps : our restless verbs
We chain—they stalk uneasy.
Naked of words we enter in
Where formless beauties walk in threes,
And soundless music stirs no trees,
And thoughtless knowledge bursts no mind,
And uneyed senses thin as wind
Swim on the darkness with no fin,
No light wing-fall ;
And speechless Joy in Sorrow's arms
Engenders Nothing : and the hours
Flatten and shine like pigments on the wall.

Thus the pretension to vision, however genuine in private, lacking a creative sense of words, turns to prettiness. At every step the verse form, not of itself but because it is not mastered, leads away from the immediate object of the experience, whatever it was, to conventional verbal equations, which, though they may remind the writer of what it was, do not evoke a fresh sensation in the mind of the reader. Butler's satire is really more poetic,

He had First Matter seen undrest :
He took her naked, all alone,
Before one rag of form was on.
The Chaos too he had descried,
And seen quite through or else he lied ;
Not that of pasteboard, which men show
For groats, at Fair of Barthol'mew,
But its great grandsire, first of the name.

"More poetic" is a comparison which cannot be used, in the present dilapidated state of critical terminology, without an attempt at definition. I mean *poetic* simply to designate a definite stylistic quality, and I do not see that it can be usefully applied, at present at any rate, in any other way. To use it of the kind of effect (as when people talk of Coleridge's poetic imagination or of certain poetic stories), and not of the means, is to open ultimate problems which can only obscure the contemporary issue. An expression, in prose or verse, is poetic when the object is immediately realized. To classify objects, which in the last analysis are feelings, into poetic and non-poetic is to plunge into endless and meaningless labour. A number of feelings, those associated with the idea of destiny for instance, are perpetually interesting and it is not surprising that they should be the subject of a great deal of poetry ; unfortunately, they are also the subject of an infinitely greater mass of stuff which is simply negligible. On the other hand, feelings not generally regarded with passionate interest will impel this interest when realized in poetic style not because the subject has been made more "important", blown-up, idealized, but because it has been exactly apprehended in its particular implications; without this any pretension to universal significance is a sham.

HUMORESQUE. By HUMBERT WOLFE. BENN, 6/-.

In considering Mr Wolfe's verse, we are in no danger of being deluded as to its real value by ambitious subject-matter. His "feelings" are also the subject of the sentimental verses to be found in the popular magazines, but he has read the poets with rather more artistic consciousness than these humbler laureates of the heart. But his attempts to stylize the banal are frustrated by an ingrained banality of style. The obvious may yield exquisite fruit, if cultivated with the devotion and intelligence of, say, Toulet, Pellerin, and Derème. But, when the expression is anything less than consummate, there is obviously nothing there to break the hideous fall. Mr. Wolfe is not well qualified to be a *fantaisiste,* for he seems to have a merely elementary sense of irony, a defect which is reflected in his technique.

In the wonder month of May
    a German and a British
poet threw their verse away
    to decorate a fetish.

That was May. A little later
    both philanderers
having found the spring a traitor
    broke their hearts in verse.

O qui dira les torts de la Rime? Are these ugly noises the result of Art, of a deliberate apprenticeship to Verlaine's suggestion, "*rien que la nuance*"? Or, perhaps, they are the work of modernist ambitions, like the absence of capitals at the beginning of lines?

Really the traditional great-poet manner demands less of the writer, and Mr. Wolfe might do well to cultivate a vein in which he shows some facility. One does not often come across such a perfect example of the naïve-profound as in these stanzas,

Some call this God, and some the hopeless cry
    of death to the unborn. I do not care.
I only know the day that you passed by
    whatever men may call this, it was there.

It was not only that the deathless bond
    was tied between us by a single word
but something in us both had passed beyond
    into that incommunicable surd.

It is a pity that such experiences are not permanent and complete.
EDGELL RICKWORD.

THE ART OF THOUGHT. By GRAHAM WALLAS. CAPE, 9/-.

The subject of this book is interesting. Thought, imaginative or abstract, is one of the means whereby people may get the best out of themselves, and that they should get the best out of themselves is clearly Mr. Wallas' desire. Yet *The Art of Thought* is a disappointing book, and it is disappointing because for Mr. Wallas' conception of "the best" it is difficult to have great enthusiasm. He does not actually state what that best is, but it is implicit, as it was bound to be, in the assumptions he makes. And most of these assumptions spring from one belief; the belief that once we exercise the art of thought we will exercise it to save society rather than ourselves. It is an amiable belief, but it is one which shows considerable narrowness of imagination. It provides us with no explanation why our thoughts should be personal; it leaves out, in fact, personality, and ignores the fact that by thought partly, by thought as a final stage at any rate, the personality works out its salvation, or fails to work it out. Society needs to be saved, but we do not: some such implication as this can be read into everything Mr. Wallas says. And it makes his treatment of the theme strangely impersonal; we feel that thought is to him a profession or a public service. One cannot resist quoting the American student: "Professor Wallas, I came to the London School of Economics to be stimulated, and I have not been stimulated."

The author divides thought into four phases: Preparation, Incubation, Illumination, and Verification, with sometimes a fifth phase, Intimation, which, we presume, may come before or after or during either of the first two. It is a good working classification and the most valuable part of the book consists of practical suggestions based on it. On hours of work, methods of treating intimations, ways of incubating, Mr. Wallas is full of good sense. We see how enlightened his views are when we contrast them with those of a Mr. J. H. M. Hare, for thirty-nine years assistant master at Eton, whom he quotes: "Three things I have always tried to impress on boys. I have asked them never to be doing nothing, but either to work, play, or sleep." That inexpressible declaration is, of course, anathema to Mr. Wallas. But he throws us back into our doubt of the value of his common sense when he relates, evidently with approval, "The great American, Dr. Charles W. Eliot, ex-President of Harvard, had published at the age of ninety, in his book *A Late Harvest* (1924), the statement that 'I began as a boy to use my mind intently several hours a day.'" One does not know whether this is intended to be encouragement or not. Certainly it is not irony. But, if common sense envisages the art of thought in such terms, one may validly suspect even the most sensible things Mr. Wallas has to say about Preparation, Incubation, Illumination, and the rest. He has his eye, rightly, on the results. But what standard has he for these? An ex-Presidency of Harvard? Or the composition of poetry such as he quotes from Mr. Drinkwater :—

> "Figures of habit driven on the stone
> By chisels governed by no heat of the brain
> But drudges of hands that moved by easy rule?"

In spite of his wide reading, his alert and interested mind, Mr. Wallas seems to have no standard of taste in practical achievement and in poetry, but only a vague and benevolent sentiment.

All these failings in the book seem to spring from the partiality of Mr. Wallas' conception of the function of thought. No one will deny that it is urgent that we should take thought for the economic and political state of the world. But it is essential, too, that we should take thought for ourselves, and it is this latter need, obvious enough surely, that Mr. Wallas tacitly ignores, as, indeed, almost all reformers of his kind do. As thought to him has a general rather than a particular purpose he can treat it as a standardized, almost a social, activity. He can write of the art of thought as if it were merely a matter of thought. He gives us rules for thinking; but in every true thought our personalities, our lives, are involved, and it is obvious that any real art of thinking must be, finally, a way of life. A writer's way of life (it need not be moral any more than it need be immoral in the conventional sense) is of infinitely more importance than his method of thought. And that way of life is necessarily a personal matter; no rules can be laid down for it, no books of any seriousness written about it. For "social thinkers", Mr. Wallas' advice may, no doubt, be helpful; I mean for that class—the Civil Service of the intelligentzia —who think exclusively and seriously of the social and economic problems of society; but it can be of small service to the imaginative writer, and it must strike him as a little futile. Yet Mr. Wallas writes for the artist no less than for the reformer. He mingles—a contemporary fault—the two kinds of thought; wishes the reformer to think like the poet, if not the poet to think like the reformer; and thus confuses two distinct provinces of reality, that of fact and compromise, and that of imagination and harmony. It is not for nothing that the book has a title like *The Art of Thought*. We feel there is a certain easy, question-begging optimism in the words, and the book, in fact, proves this.

EDWIN MUIR.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE. By HUGH I'ANSON FAUSSET. CAPE, 12/6.

Mr. Fausset's book is described on the dust jacket as a creative study of Coleridge's achievement in terms of his personality, and is a typical, if extreme, example of the kind of criticism this preliminary definition of the critic's labours, unexceptionable if it were accurate, has taught us in a number of recent critical works to expect. Moreover, while Mr. Fausset is incapable of an attitude, the emotional reactions towards Romanticism which, it is evident from his treatment, prompted his choice of a Romantic subject for study, are those implicit in the attitude of the greater part of contemporary criticism of Romantic literature. If goodwill and industry, however, can extricate what interest attaches to the typical from these three hundred and fifty closely printed pages, they can do no more. Mr. Fausset has, in fact, quite literally nothing at all to say, and leaves the reviewer, less happily endowed with the gift of saying it, in the same predicament. Interest and duty will at once be served by letting Mr. Fausset step into the breach and present his own case. Of "Lewti" Mr. Fausset remarks on page 69: "Like an incantation it transcends the physical and the intellectual and yet captivates the senses. It hovers in the air like wind and lulls like stealing waters. It is at once transparent and iridescent, unearthly, and yet inwoven with rich, dissolving images. No poet could control such enchantment. Like some magic potion it was distilled of strange contrarieties." These reflections are repeated in slightly varying form on suitable occasions throughout the book, and may with accuracy be taken as a summary of Mr. Fausset's critical views on Coleridge's poetry, if we except a few comments on "The Ancient Mariner," of little intrinsic value, but remarkable in the context as some evidence of an attempt at critical perception.

Mr. Fausset's main object, however, is rather psychological interpretation than literary criticism. His method will be clear from the following passages, transcribed at intervals from his pages, whose contents do not vary sufficiently to make selection possible. "Once again Coleridge was flying from a teasing world to drug himself with 'strange beatitudes'. His philosophy was the servant of his temperament. He longed for 'the plentitude and permanence of bliss' and he thought it was to be captured by a vague sensational excess. For this, despite all his metaphysical jargon, was what his conception of love amounted to." . . . . "But from childhood Coleridge lacked this sense of the concrete; often as he had preached the necessity of a union of feeling and thought for both the poet and the philosopher, he himself could never really unite them, because for him they lacked a common denominator in primary experience. Consequently, the superstructure of his writing had the most tenuous foundations; its complexity did not derive, as it should have, from an essential simplicity, and his sense of the infinite remained amorphous for want of achieving contact with the finite." . . . . "In short, Coleridge lacked the courage to scan the face of Life disinterestedly, to mark not merely its expressive beauty but its scowls and wrinkles, its leers and lightning flashes and clouds of gloomy violence."

To abandon irony, which becomes as tedious as the tedium that provokes it, these generalizations, repeated and elaborated at interminable length, do actually contain all that Mr. Fausset has to say about Coleridge. Page follows page, the facts of Coleridge's life dimly emerge, but of Coleridge we learn nothing; of what Mr. Fausset thinks about Coleridge we learn nothing; even of what he feels about Coleridge we learn nothing, beyond what we can gather from the continual odour of moral censoriousness that dissuades the reader from what charity he might otherwise be inclined to accord. The author remarks, it is true, that Coleridge "had suffered all his life from moralists", and seems unaware of the only consistent and recognizable attitude that informs his own book. Even a moralistic attitude, however, is better than none, and, had Mr. Fausset the courage, or the intelligence, to admit and examine his own moral indignation and face the conclusions, we might obtain from a writer who has been at the pains to write a hundred thousand words on Coleridge the expression of some approximately definite opinion, worthless or interesting, on the character of Coleridge's work, its relation to English literature and to poetic production in general, in short, its value. All we can find at the end of a volume in which Mr. Fausset, grieved, facetious, patronizing, but always hortatory, discovers and denounces Coleridge as a dreamer, a liar, a weakling, and a sentimentalist, flabby in purpose, divorced from reality, subjective, hysterical, and the rest of it, is the surprising concluding statement, "Yet it is to his defects, to his tainted temperament, that posterity owes his three or four inimitable poems. . . . To the feverish sensibility which led Coleridge to the laudanum bottle and the piety of Archbishop Leighton, his country owes the miracles of 'The Ancient Mariner,' 'Christabel,' and 'Kubla Khan.' " The statement is surprising because, if Mr. Fausset were ever conscious of the meaning of what he writes, these words, embodying a plausible, if inaccurate, point of view, would rightly have formed, not a conclusion, but the commencement of a book differing in every point from the one he has written.

But the confusion of Mr. Fausset's mind is inextricable, and the only genuine interest we are left with is in the motives that induced him to take the trouble to write a book on Coleridge at all. Confusion, bad writing, even moral exhortation, could all be tolerated; but the most singular and, to the reader, the most insupportable characteristic of this book is that its author has not the slightest interest in the work or personality of the writer he is discussing. Were it not for the quotations, it would be impossible to conjecture from Mr. Fausset's pages that he is describing a man who influenced every considerable writer of his time, and of whom in his decay Lamb wrote "the neighbourhood of such a man is as exciting as the presence of fifty ordinary persons. It is enough to be within the whiff and wind of his genius for us not to possess our souls in quiet." One can only conclude that Coleridge recommended himself to Mr. Fausset as providing a convenient and obvious receptacle for the disemburdenment of a number of those sententious and moral reflections whose retention is apt to cause many of us discomfort.

J. F. Holms.

POETRY AND SCIENCE. By I. A. RICHARDS. KEGAN PAUL, 2/6.

It is noticeable at once that Mr. Richards is more convinced of the value of Science than that of Poetry, for in this short book he devotes much space and many clichés to the discussion of the latter, confidently leaving the former to speak for itself. This is, perhaps, to be expected in an age when Science, Scientific Truths, Real Knowledge, etc., are invested with the unqualified power of a universal fetish—presumably the reading public of Israel was apt to accept any prophet who thundered in the name of Jehovah.

Mr. Richards is convinced that, until lately, the "endeavour to explain the high place of poetry in human affairs" has met with few convincing results because "*until recently* the preliminary task [of finding out what poetry is] could only be incompletely carried out." One must suppose, therefore, that Mr. Richards is better equipped to make this discovery, since he attacks the problem in his second chapter, "The Poetic Experience." Because "it is at last possible to understand in general how the mind works in any experience," and possible, moreover, to point out what is important in it, "Let us take an experience," he begins "ten minutes of a person's life and describe it in broad outline." He continues, with an unfailing ear for the heavy rhetoric of the pedantic expositor, "A poem, let us say Wordsworth's 'Westminster Bridge' sonnet, is such an experience, it is the experience the right kind of reader has when he peruses the verses. . . Let us begin by reading it very slowly, preferably aloud. . . And let us read it experimentally," etc. Let us by all means. We shall then be in a position to analyse the poem "from the surface inwards, to speak metaphorically. The surface is the impression of the printed words on the retina. This sets up an agitation which we must follow as it goes deeper and deeper." This, then, is the scientific approach, but, as Mr. Richards's views on poetry, expressed at greater length in *Principles of Literary Criticism,* were reviewed in an earlier number of *The Calendar,* it is not necessary to do so again. Here it is of importance to discover what he means by Science.

He is, of course, nowhere explicit. "Outside the Sciences," he says, "we think very much as our ancestors thought a hundred or two hundred generations ago," and chooses as an instance the fact that we still boil vegetables. So a number of us do, but it is a meagre support for the implication that the world has always been divided into a swarm of Drs Panglos and a select band of heralds enumerating only "*certified scientific statements.*" The Ptolemaic system was once a certified scientific statement, Galileo's is another, differing in that it has not as yet been disproved, but, unless Mr. Richards can show it to be an absolute truth, the difference between them remains one of degree. He then goes on to consider the effects of science. "The Central dominant change in the intellectual background may be described as the *Neutralization of Nature,* the transference from the Magical View to the scientific", and this sounds impressive, especially as it is supposed to have taken place gradually during the last 300 years and rapidly in the last sixty, until the two points of view are described. "By the Magical View I mean, roughly, the belief in a world of Spirits and Powers which control events and which can be evoked and, to some extent, controlled by human practices. . . . In its place we have the universe of the mathematician, a field for the tracing out of ever wider and more general uniformities. A field in which intellectual certainty is, almost for the first time, available, and on an unlimited scale." And in the middle of this charmed circle stands Mr. Richards the wizard, with the key of unlimited intellectual certainty up his sleeve. Maskelyne's is more convincing.

As Mr. Richards says earlier in his essay, the effect of Science on Poetry is of the greatest importance—"We shall not have *dealt adequately* with it unless we have raised questions of *great significance*"—but the problem is in no way elucidated by a lick-spittle attitude to science. Mr. Richards does not display the "passionate knowledge of poetry and the capacity for dispassionate psychological analysis" which he considers indispensable. In the last chapter, "Some Contemporary Poets", of a remark by Mr. Murry on Hardy—"His reaction to an episode has behind it and within it a reaction to the universe"—he says, "This is not as I should put it were I making a statement", but we cannot be sure that he wouldn't when one finds him making a statement on the next page about another poet, "His utterance, in spite of his words, becomes not at all a recognition of this indifference [of the universe], but voices instead an impulse to turn away, to forget it, to seek shelter in the warmth of his own familiar thickets of dream, not to stay out in the wind." And one finds the same slackness of mind when he speaks of Mr. Lawrence as a poet so greatly gifted, having just asserted that, beyond doubt, "the bulk of his published verse is prose, scientific prose too." It is, indeed, clear that Mr. Richards has failed to set forth the problem which he is discussing, so that, when he winds up with the assurance that poetry is capable of saving us from the chaos into which the development of psychology will throw us, he is not very reassuring, but then neither is such a writer's forecast of that chaos very disquieting.

DOUGLAS GARMAN.

FICTION.

THE MODERN NOVEL. By ELIZABETH A. DREW. CAPE, 7/6.

Probably Miss Drew was wise in not attempting a prolonged frontal attack on her subject. If sporadic flank incursions, however, are to be at all useful, they should be undertaken with an eye on the ultimate objective; the possible final synthesis should be kept in mind. If "the problem of language, the use of the medium in all its aspects, is the basic problem of any work of literature", then the merits of the attitudes to sex of D. H. Lawrence and Michael Arlen are not very relevant. And it is to topics of the latter kind that Miss Drew devotes most of her space. Admitting that the pretensions of the majority of novels to æsthetic status collapse as soon as scrutinized, the fact that she still considers them worthy of appreciative attention shows that Miss Drew has either not realized this radical worthlessness or that she has alternative standards.

In pronouncing a bare verdict of good or bad, the critic of fiction is in no worse case than the critic of verse. And so far as giving a plausibly objective air to his judgment goes, he has at his disposal such speciously technical terms as character, situation, incident, narrative, etc. But, if he would give his judgment further validity by centering it in the work under consideration, he will find such terms only approximately descriptive of the impressions to be organized. For, whereas rhythm corresponds to an actual excitement in the reader's mind that can be traced to its source in the means employed, character corresponds to nothing so definite. Rhythm is a property of words, character a product that needs analysis before a satisfactory account of its effect can be given in terms of its constituents, and a product, moreover, that invites extra-literary scrutiny. Such scrutiny is fatal to criticism, for, though it may be that the critic's ultimate concern is with the conception of life (the "values") of which the novel is a vehicle, yet he is only so concerned in so far as that conception is made active through art. That that conception is inadequate, to take the negative, which is the more frequent case, is only revealed by a break-down in the expression, a flaw in the technique, for it cannot be known apart from the form in which it becomes manifest. Obviously, a right apprehension of that "form" depends on a right apprehension of its elements—of which character is generally considered the principal.

However, the impossibility of ignoring this diversity leads to the perception that character has two aspects, a static and a dynamic, "character in repose" and "character in action", each of which can be further sub-divided according to whether it is the "inner" or the "outer man" that is presented. But these terms, being descriptive not critical, indicate the angle of presentation but not its success or failure. They assume, too, that at whatever level it is presented, character is to be regarded as a portrait of an imagined human being. If that is the assumption, criticism may either deal with the degree of illusion as such or the significance of the illusion as a symbol of humanity (to praise a novelist for his "knowledge of human nature" is plainly irrelevant; a psycho-analyst or a parish priest might possess as much). Mere degree of illusion, however, provides no adequate test; novelists who can do nothing else are able to perform the trick with ease, since "nothing is easier than to create for oneself the idea of a human being, a figure and a character, from glimpses and anecdotes." Nor does depth of illusion matter: Raskolnikov is "deeper" than Tom Jones, in the sense that more of his interior is directly exposed, but he is a figure of different not greater significance.

On the other hand, the judgment of "values" arrived at through a consideration of the symbolic aspect of character is unreliable because of the danger, almost the certainty, that attention will be diverted from the symbol to what it may be guessed to symbolize, which, if the artist is incompetent and the critic hospitable and sympathetic, will be much. It is for no other reason than that Conrad's heroes have been discerned by many earnest people to stand for something really tremendous in the matter of soul, that that writer has been so over-estimated. Moreover, a novelist who is capable of "staging" a figure of tragic possibilities (by making use of the reader's readiness to objectify that has been noted above) may utterly fail to realize those possibilities. But this conclusion is reached without any direct examination of character as an illusion or as a symbol at all, for "character" is merely the term by which the reader alludes to the pseudo-objective image he composes of his responses to an author's verbal arrangements. Unfortunately, that image once composed, it can be criticized from many irrelevant angles—its moral, political, social, or religious, significance considered, all as though it possessed actual objectivity, were a figure of the inferior realm of real life. And, because the annual cataract of serious fiction is as full of "life-like" little figures of such, and no more, significance as drinking water is of infusoria, it passes critical filters in undiminished volume and unrectified impurity while the meagre stream of genuine literature, being burdened with "the forms of things unknown", is anxiously traced to its hypothetical source—a veritable psychologico-biographical bog.

In this connexion, the main thing to be noted about the new "subjective" novelists is their increasing tendency to rely for their effect not on set pieces of character-drawing, but directly on the poetic properties of words. The idea of a character's consciousness is created in the reader by the exploitation of the emotive powers of language used to evoke concrete imagery and sensation. The idea so created has unusual reality; the idea of Dedalus, for instance, that is obtained from compulsory experience of Dublin Beach as he would have experienced it is not unauthenticated by any suspicious connivance of Nature, as when the thunder rumbles conveniently over Egdon Heath.

Miss Drew calls this the "stream-of-consciousness" method —rather pointlessly, for under such a head Henry James must be included—and is inclined to condemn it because "the concern . . . being entirely with the immediate in consciousness, the result must of necessity lack all proportion or perspective as a vision of anything beyond the immediate." Since it cannot be seriously contended that the past is not, in effect, present in the immediate consciousness to be reported if reporting were the whole matter, the fault must be, not in the method but in the writer using it, as, in fact, is shown by the success of those chapters of *Ulysses* in which it is applied. It is unfair to blame the defenceless consciousness for its lack of an "artistic relevance" to which it has not aspired, and one gathers Miss Drew does not really wish to do so. Her label led her astray.

C. H. RICKWORD.

TWO LIVES. By W. E. LEONARD. HEINEMANN, 6/-.

This book is the work of a man whose experience of love had as tragic a conclusion as can be imagined. Relying on our common human sympathy, he can get effects which are not by any means negligible but do not essentially differ from those of recorded fact or of the prose novel. The form, a series of sonnets, raises the emotional pitch, but I cannot see a corresponding intensification of the expression. Experience is very much overrated as the direct subject of a poem or any other work of art— "What's Hecuba to him . . . ?" But to expect the reader to be moved because this or that event really happened is to exact his sympathy and not his admiration.

AN INTRODUCTION TO MUSIC. By H. E. PIGGOTT. DENT, 6/-.

The numerous bores who profess a passion for music "without knowing anything about it" are no longer justified in their lamentable state. It is unlikely, nevertheless, that the chorus of complacent self-depreciation will lose any of its Handelian Festival volume. Mr. Piggott is no mere guide to appreciation. His aim is to instruct the ignorant in order to enable them to understand. Now, understanding of an art is impossible without an analytical knowledge of the technical means employed in it—which cannot be acquired without a certain amount of effort. Consequently, to Mr. Piggott's admirably illustrated explanation of musical technique (given with the minimum of "technical" jargon) are added numerous exercises. But whoever takes the trouble to read this book will find that its author's original approach, together with his always clear, if at times heavy, manner, makes his subject far more easily comprehensible than academic expositions would lead him to suppose.

COLLATION

"SO rare," she had said to him graciously in acknowledgment, "at this season".

Her rings turned below her fingertips, the icy cameo cut in moonstone pressed toward the palm and revealed again as she spoke. She had placed the small neat bunch of violets upon the veined marble table-top among the cups. The tea-urn reflected in one brilliant cheek the embroidery and the bosom, and in the other the black, polished jacket, of her two guests.

Minot touched the wilted silk of his tie and the motion of his reflected hand was a small white flower suddenly stemming in the brass belly of the urn. He regretted the violets, conscious of having been, perhaps, tender upon an occasion which required chaste formality. The afternoon hung in straight lilac folds against the café glass, and the eye of Minot fitted the hôtel de ville carefully between the boxed yew and the lobe of the other guest's ear.

"I must talk," said the hostess with her rings, "I suppose of Carlotta . . . ", with a bright weary smile. "Carlotta," she murmured wearily as though one always talked of Carlotta, "hardly my daughter. Her lack of precision in the most vital matters . . . plans, you know. *I* don't know. She writes of Switzerland or a run over to Greece this autumn. . ." The cool tips of flesh, the bleached veins on her hands slightly inflated with effort, divided a cube of sugar. "One is never," she relaxed on the scarlet and polished straw of the fauteuil, "never quite sure where one is . . . "

Minot examined his thin wrist as his hand approached the tongue of the spoon. He considered its identity with Schumann, its delicacy in Florestan, its arched step in the Gavotte Spirituelle.

He observed the sharp opacity of the sheathed bone, reflecting that Carlotta had, it was apparent, remembered him only at the final moment, had written, perhaps, that the gentleman who had taught her music in the past must be entertained before one quitted France. He felt the annoyance and the lament in Carlotta's mother that she had never ascertained to what degree of prominence Minot played. If one but *knew,* he sensed, if it were concert-hall or strictly private activities. . .

"Athens,"—she eyed him uncertainly and escaped to Greece —"à propos, that 'perfect flower of Ionian genius'—or was it Dorian?"

Her smooth dry cheeks quivered with laughter. The other woman smiled deeply, richly, in response. Minot watched the solid sugar in the bowl of his spoon crumbling to tea.

"The flattery," said the other guest deeply, "of appealing to one's intelligence".

They were not, Minot perceived, to talk of Carlotta. His eyes, glancing among the fronds of feather which voluted in agitation as she spoke, remarked the hooded mansardes crouching along the roof and the weary Roi Lear in the public gardens below them. A corbeille of iris thrust sharp white blades against the bony bronze, and Minot, beneath the women's words, recalled the pale stalks of the Judean Kings tapering behind Carlotta's profile, her chin proceeding across Melchisédech, Abraham, Moïse, and the hand across her eyes below the lancet windows. This, set in motion, rang on like a bronze bell which continues to sound until someone lays his fingers upon it.

" 'The ruinous fluidity of the Greeks,' " his hostess had remembered. The strainer had functioned ill and her cup was sown with dark stemmed petals of tea. The annoyance of this, and the exaggeration of one crisp hair from the garçon's mustaches across the brioche.

"Nothing," she had protested, "but brioche? No cake, no pain grillé?"

Minot avoided the warm yellow bread and the apple tart for which she had sent out. The powdered scales of crust dusted their fingertips with white. Scales, he thought. Scales whipped to a fury. Up and down the panelled walls and the fluttering crystal of the chandelier, the precise fury of Carlotta's thin brown arms. Scales lashing the luminous purity of the staircase, the white stalks of unlit wax quivering in darkness. Not even Bach hard and fierce enough for the steel whips of her fingers across the black marble and the bare brilliant floor.

" 'The religious temper of Greece,' " continued his hostess, relieved now that, ignored, she could gracefully ignore him. Slight, if of any musical moment, she felt. He hung in silence recalling the bladed notes that shredded furiously the odor of hyacinth and short grass. His eyes were upon the Roi Lear who stood bewildered by the magnolia boughs that were still heavy with unbruised blossoms. Deep bright pansies grew up between the cold bronze knees. The inadequacy, Minot resented, of shrubbery, of Carlotta walking with Versailles behind her like a peacock tail. Her sharp voice had stalked in the queen's rooms, her words blading the brocade to ribbons, her delight being in the scream of the taffeta which had not ripped and in the splinter of the unvidated glass.

The fingers of the other guest, laced in fresh kid, moved intimately across the bitter marble. Her arm, twisted with green-eyed adders, her thick rich voice embraced her hostess and their perfect unity. As she spoke her breath passed in slight even perfumed blasts across the tea.

"This male probing of woman's consciousness," she said richly and without impatience, "as if the male vibration was not really and fundamentally opposed . . ."

Minot's ears were hollowed for words of Carlotta on their lips—Carlotta resurrected, fleshed, and husbanded, with three more years of life scarring her face. He listened, but without hope, knowing that whatever they might say of her would serve only to set the confusion of reality between him and the sharp fierce passion of her memory. He preferred to remember—heard as distinctly as though Carlotta actually played—her notes like a winter carnival, her fingers as though carved in cold and brilliant glass.

The lilac shell of the sky had been filling gradually with pale stars, and now the café was mildly astir with the regular apéritif customers who were drifting in and seeking out their usual tables. Beside them an old man had seated himself, and he sat with his long warm nose hanging over his purple cassis, thrusting long injured looks upon them down the fine violet veins in his nostrils.

"How can I tell you," said Carlotta's mother prettily, "of that feeling of real camaraderie which I sense in these Gallic people . . ."

In Minot the unbroken wave rose, the unbroken wave in which the fish-scaled roof of the abbey floated, turning its lean belly upward. Carlotta had remarked that it rendered " 'not grey only, but all colors alike in grey' ". She had followed the small moons of the goat prints, the black, bright beads of the goat manure. Her feet were dark and smooth as leather bruising white scars on the firm flesh of the pelouse. Below them the curved shear-waters had dipped and turned in the wave, bearing the polished agate and jade of sea-anemone on their solid breasts. The delicately-scrolled shells had been engraved on the lucent sand like insects caught in amber and Carlotta's head below him had been cupped and haloed in an unending glamour of sand. "Minot," . . . as Carlotta said Minot through the thongs of her fingers, or calling to him down the bright sour wind with her voice cupped in the bronze shells of her hands . . . "mon Minot, mon Minot". He was shaken suddenly by the tumult of Carlotta's eyes pacing the horizon, Carlotta's flesh as sweet as cinnamon, Carlotta's mouth like warm bitter steel on his mouth. . .

"Do write her." The white cameo struck coolly before him, the hand recalling the garçon and achieving across the lilac and perfumed sheets of money, "she was so anxious that we should have met".

He had risen with them, groping for his hat which had fallen, and remarking the violets forgotten among the cups. His hostess disregarded the bared fingertips of his gloved hand, the frayed hat-brim, feeling that dismal people should be forbidden, forbidden, dismissing him with, "Carlotta and the babies are back now", as they drifted out, "back from the Palm Beach. . ."

Kay Boyle.

TOGETHER

Being alone in the old room
Opened a window and blew out
The histories of pose and word
Whose fluff clings to dramatic chairs.

These were as bare now as my gaze
Trained on the unshut door unmoving
As I in aught but expectation
Swayed by the mantel's ticking moon

Till the curtains woke and you entered and waited
And then smiled, standing silent.
But an image died there with a freak's agony
And an image of mine wavered as when

Once I called at an unhappy house
Where a profound knock raised sighs
From sealed rooms, and eyes of despair
Like an antique fountain's in an upper window.

Our sad fears meet : Something shapeless
Frets you still, and me my working
Madness betrays before consolidation
To languors of retreat not soon acidulated—

The ravening return
From the action to the gesture
From the gesture to the mood and the mood
Into darkness.

From the consummate touch
And climax-plotting foibles from
Tacit welcome to the lust and wonder
To a smile to a handshake

Away to sudden distance where
A summer frock came sunning through
Dubious fancy, proof by eyes,
Back from approach to a picture

Fondly, and to feet on gravel
And linen over the lawn, finely
To premonition from perfume, at last
To the want in aloneness.

— My fell monism; you wrenched free:
Your nevertheless caress; I demur. Then
Minds unlock and longing looks
Are in singularity,

Pondered ring, shy brooch
Both in acid; then inscriptions
Rubbed from fly-leaves. Embraces
Unnerve in aforethought.

A blush, hesitating; then
Eyes absent, lax arms, complaisance:
Dim undressings and the polite "yes"
And unstressed partings. Now hotly

Shame of the pillow.
The proximate couch then
And a topic with crossed knees—
To chairs, to chairs alongside

To chairs facing, to the
Further not-moved-up chair; outside
In park and cafés not alone now
Any chair then.

— And your face fails:
Pale rotating will
Segmented from radiance
Whirled, whittled to a smile

Falling from gaiety—
The stray ardours of a meteor
Ironized, waning
In windy zones

I could affirm the quiet arms
Till to-day it crashed
Cold into the room; dust
Fumed from surviving breasts.

— "Good-bye." The spectral hand held
Removing reddens at the door.
Eastward outside
Clouds storm up from the sun,

And the unclenched fancy with relief
Rabid as a ghoul inhales
Acrid hues and phosphorus
From that declension in the raw —

Samples the crops
With untactile plunder anew
In eyes on streets uneared
By the locusts of the rain.

Here's the abysm beneath feet :
After talk, echoing space.
One shall equate these thrusting worlds —
The lockjawed smiler.

But we, woman, to reprieve
Memory from misery
Must stifle in dreams
Till blood's next tide

And with the waking mind re-write
Their indignant confrontations fit
For a change of state
More apt to the light that cheats by rote.

Bertram Higgins.

A TALE OF WOMEN

A DOG was howling in the yard. Cats were chasing each other in the attics and squealing, like girls, with shrill voices. Dunay was lying in bed, under a rumpled coloured blanket. His eyes were sunken, his beard stuck up like a worn-out dust-brush. His lips were blue: three months Dunay had suffered in loneliness. Clasping his bony knees with his thin hands, he sat for a while in painful meditation, his mouth wide open, and then fell back beard downwards on to the hot, sweaty pillow.

At noon came the old man Ogurtzov, Terentiy Moisseitch. He sat down on a bench near the bed, and amicably devoured the invalid with his wicked twinkling eyes.

"They wanted to paint out the eagle, but it won't be hidden. . ."

"What are you talking about?"

"They've covered the eagles on the waggon with paint, but you can see them just the same. . ."

"Can you?"

"Just the same!"

Dunay sighed from the depths of his chronic misery and gazed at the fly-blown ceiling.

"They can't bear the stench of those eagles. . ."

"No, they can't. It's too much for them. . .," whispered Ogurtzov. "There were specialists in the old days, but now there are all sorts of riff-raff. . . I've stopped taking food. . ."

"Stopped taking food?"

"Yes, I never have a bite!"

Ogurtzov spoke in innuendo, wound it in and out like a hare over snow. He had harsh, scowling features; his voice was hard, inflexible. He put his words together like piling faggots, first a crash, then gradually dropping to a harsh whisper.

"A needle will outweigh a pood if you use a beam a hundred sazhens long!"

"What are you getting at?" asks Dunay.

"So the proverb says. If I swear at somebody—it eases my mind. My heart does not stay in its place, it rolls about inside and comes up to my throat in obscene words. Give me my way—I'd kill two men right off and would not be sorry for it. You know my character!"

Terentiy Moisseitch tied up tangles of cunning, double-meaning words, his heart warmed with hidden rancour.

"What idiotic money they have now: one stick and six rings! You can't count them—you haven't got fingers enough. ."

"Will it ever pass?" sighed Dunay.

"It will pass all right. Don't think about dying yet awhile."

"Three months I've been lying here. . ."

"You've got to be patient. Take fifteen years away from me and I'd try my hands on the present system. I'll show you what I'd like to do to those sons of swine. . ."

Ogurtzov lifted himself up. His beard swung round circumspectly, like a compass-needle over the coloured blanket; he glanced under the bed.

"There's nobody here?"

"I lie all day by myself."

"You have a very bad hut, Ivan Semenytch. The devils with their long ears sit in every crack and listen to what we talk about".

Terentiy Moisseitch's eyes are small and green, and a little sharp, green flame glitters in them like fine needles.

Cats chased one another in the attics.

Ogurtzov anxiously pricked up his ears.

"Who is that running about there?"

"The cats have been plaguing me all day. . ."

"These days even cats aren't like cats: so sly they are. It's passed from the people to the animals."

"Say what you were going to say."

"What was I going to say? I should like to screw off some people's heads, and first of all your wife's, in order to stop her pranks. You know who she spends her nights with?"

"I know."

"So she's given you over? She pulls up her skirt before your very eyes?"

Dunay lay harmless and quiet, with his yellow waxen cheeks. His beard stirred a little, casting a short shadow on the white-washed wall. A blue spiral of dust trembled in the air. Gloomily gazed the shrine with its dark features of blackening saints; a glass shrine lamp swung like a severed head on its filthy strings. A few flies were clinging to the strings with their dead feet, looking from a distance like a fluffy fringe.

Ogurtzov spat on the floor with his evil quivering lips, and ground the spittle away with his boot.

"I am sick of looking at everything. I'd like to crush the snake—but I got no strength. You understand me?"

"I understand."

"You are lucky, Ivan Semenytch: you lie in your cottage and don't go out anywhere, and don't get upset. But I can't sit in one spot, I'm pushed from pillar to post, and I hear all sorts of words against myself. . ."

"Your daughter comes here," whispers Dunay.

"Don't talk to me about it, Ivan Semenytch!"

"Is it hard on you?"

"Very hard: they've ruined my temper altogether. . ."

Ogurtzov went off—bowed, high-shouldered, dragging his feet with effort. His white beard drooped. Thrust a stick into his cold benumbed hands and hang a linen sack across his shoulder—Terentiy Moisseitch would look like a beggar. Everybody hated him and he hated everybody. In his five-windowed house young girls and men would gather, fix up a union of "devils", and all sorts of performances. . . The Commissar of the Ispolkom—Gavrushka Kochin—would drive up in his wickerwork cart with springs, while Terentiy Moisseitch himself. . . Yes! Terentiy Moisseitch himself had no right to vote and had to look at his house with its five windows, opening on to the street, and at his pretty cart with indifferent eyes of a stranger: as if Terentiy Moisseitch himself didn't exist and didn't own anything. What times!

His hands and feet used not to tremble—now they tremble.

His proud back was never bowed—now he has no strength to straighten himself.

There were specialists in the old days—now there were all sorts of riff-raff. But you weren't allowed to put out your tongue! . .

O Lord!

Terentiy Moisseitch crossed himself before the white belfry of the Church of the Madonna, and thought angrily:

"When wilt Thou kill the accursed ones?"

II

Anna Polikarpovna looked like a bilberry, with her eyes meekly cast down. A wily dissatisfied smile was always on her soft swollen lips. It never left her soft swollen lips. A sly little laugh dropped from her downcast eyes. Youth only comes once! To-night Gavrila Petrovitch, the Commissar of the Ispolkom, would be coming to see her. For him the little smiles fell from under her long girlish eye-lashes, for him was the smile of her soft swollen lips. She would kiss Gavrila Petrovitch to death with her hungry lips; she would say to him:

"My dear! My dearest dear!"

The samovar purred, cleaned with sand, the carefully washed cups glistened. The small pieces of sugar lay like little stones of snow in the glass sugar-box. The table-cloth spread its lacy pattern on the table, holiday fashion.

Youth comes only once!

Dunay lay beneath the coloured blanket knitting together the yellow wrinkles in his forehead. It was not for his pleasure that the samovar was purring. It was not for his pleasure that the sunlight was playing on the carefully washed cups. Gavrushka Kochin would drink out of one cup, Anna Polikarpovna, who looked like a bilberry, would drink out of another. All sorts of devils would gather around the festive table, and the corroding sorrow, accompanying Dunay on his last journey, would be drowned in their laughter.

Entered Mariana, Terentiy Ogurtzov's daughter, a young red-cheeked woman, piercing through and through you with her bold eyes. She quickly unbuttoned her black coat and threw it on the bed, over Dunay's feet. It made Dunay feel sick to look at the red-cheeked, healthy woman. He shoved his feeble feet about, trying to throw the coat down on the floor. Mariana said to Anna Polikarpovna:

"We'll move him to the back room!"

Dunay was used to that, too.

When Mariana pulled away his coloured blanket, he remained lying for a few seconds, motionless in his pink pants, girded up with a narrow belt. Anna Polikarpovna took him by the shoulder with strange cold hands, and said kindly in a strange cold voice :

"Move in there, Ivan Semenytch, for to-day !"

Dunay opened his eyes, searched for the little cross on his breast with his trembling hand, heavily lowered his feet in their woollen stockings. The young, healthy women took Dunay under the arms, and both would have liked to push him over, beard downwards, with all their strength, to squeeze his scraggy goose-throat with their playful hands, and to throw the useless body out of the hut. . .

Mariana laughed.

"How light you've got, Ivan Semenytch, like a chicken's tail !"

The angry blood rushed to Dunay's head. He sat long on the chest in the back room, then heavily climbed up on to the old wooden bedstead. Anna Polikarpovna brought the coloured blanket from the front room and wrapped Dunay's feet in it.

"Are you cold, Ivan Semenytch?"

"Go away !" hatefully whispered Ivan Semenytch's lips.

"Are you angry?"

"Pfooh !"

"Why don't you die, Ivan Semenytch, you only torment yourself !"

Dunay was silent.

His head swelled with impotent wrath, anguish gnawed his tortured heart. You can't get away from grief. Day and night she sat at the head of Dunay's bed, adding fresh wrinkles to his brow, entangling his beard, dying his cold lips with the hue of the tomb. His pink pants stunk of stale acid; the white transparent lice crept about his flabby body, crawling out on to the coloured blanket. Dunay crushed them with his white bloodless nails, washing the nails with his viscid spittle.

He had had wings, now they were clipped off—Dunay lived to be laughed at. His former strength had been taken from him, his wife, who looked like a bilberry, had been taken from him, too. O Lord, O merciful God ! Was it not she who had smoothed Dunay's beard with her thin snaky fingers? Was it not she who had pulled the boots off Dunay's stout legs, when he cried in his drunken fits :

"Anka !"

A cockroach fell from the black ceiling on to the coloured blanket, and struck Dunay in his chest like a stone. He pressed his trembling hands to his chest, breathing heavily with his mouth wide open. It was not the cockroach that had struck him in the chest—hatred and jealousy were twisting his blue lips. He could hear Gavrushka's voice from the front room, and two other voices, thin, squeaky, cut his heart like sharp knives. .

The back room was quiet. The black evening came creeping from the yard through the two windows, and stood like a black pillar in front of the bed, and hung on the wall a black shaggy tail, like that of an old dog, killed by red soldiers. . .

III

Dariya Kochina, pregnant a fifth time, gazed hatefully at her large swollen womb, away from which Gavrila Petrovitch ran after strange, slim women, and knocked it with her fist, hatefully :

"You did it, you cur, and now. . ."

Dariya's gentle sheepish eyes filled with tears, her lips quivered.

The miserable little hut was dark and smelt of slops. The crazy moon with its crooked horns stared through the two windows across the roof of Ypat's cottage, and span a fine golden yarn on the floor. The heavy, dungy air from the yard swept into the hut in a great wave, mingling with the smell of clothes and the sour odour of old slops.

Bondina, the soldier's wife, said hurriedly, feeling Dariya's womb with her dry, deft fingers :

"Go and lie down on the bed, I'll look at you there ! . ."

On the bed Archipka was sitting, her four-year-old son, with the red hair of a calf. He stared out of the darkness with his mouth agape, and snuffled. Dariya dragged him down on to the floor. Archipka began to bawl. Dariya hit him on the head, and made him sit down on a bench, in the front corner. From the bench Archipka climbed up on the table, and sat on the table like a large, big-bellied pot.

Bondina whispered, re-adjusting her handkerchief :

"Raise your skirt higher ! Put your legs like this !"

Archipka shouted from the table :

"Mamma, give me a bit of bread !"

Dariya lay down on her bed, her naked legs spread wide open, and looked at her large swollen womb across her nose. In the darkness it glimmered in a huge monstrous pile, like an unwanted sack tied on above her legs; it confused her thoughts, squeezed repulsive tears out of her eyes. And all her life seemed poisoned, turned inside out through this large swollen womb; and the tiny hut, drowned in the thick, dungy darkness, was filled with piercing anguish, with a woman's unbearable grief.

"When did you conceive?" asks Bondina.

"How should I know?" answers Dariya in a low voice.

"It will be difficult, see!"

"Do it, for Christ's sake! I beg you!"

"But suppose something happens?"

"It doesn't matter: don't be afraid—I'll answer myself for it. Do it so as I could never have a child any more. I don't want to bear it, if he won't look at me. I have been married to him hardly six years and this is my fifth. Where's there any beauty in this? And he wants one that's pretty, with a small belly. . . Do it for Christ's sake, Natalia, have pity on me!"

"Well, get up," says Bondina: "Come to see me to-morrow, but let's agree upon one thing: I don't like gossiping myself, so you mustn't tell anybody either. . . D'you agree?"

Dariya crossed herself at the ikon in a dark corner.

"May I fall through the ground on this very spot if I say a word! Only help me for Christ's sake. . ."

After Bondina had gone, Dariya kissed Archipka on his red calf-hair, and whispered caressingly:

"Don't you cry, sonnie, listen to what I tell you! Go and lie down on the bed and sleep! To-morrow I'll give you some porridge and milk".

"And what else?" asks Archipka.

"Sleep! I'll bake you some potatoes."

"I don't want any potatoes. . ."

Dariya clapped Archipka on the back, covered his head with a thick coarse blanket, and hurriedly began to sing to him:

"And my little sonnie
Will sleep, will sleep. . .
And a little wolf
Will come to him, will come to him. . ."

Archipka grew still, stopped kicking about with his legs. . .

Dariya turned up his heavy sleepy eye-lids slightly, sighed with relief, threw her coat over her shoulders, and went quickly out into the street.

The tops of the trees above the river shone in the moonlight; the clouds were running by in tiny flocks. The dogs, possessed by a nocturnal alarm, wandered round the barns, sniffing the warm spicy air with their thin noses, and angrily barking at the crescent, breaking through the dark clouds. The church bell drowsily struck twelve, and the geese screamed on the river-bank.

Night.

Someone was dragging a sack of bricks from the former land-owner's estate, someone was pulling a board off the semi-ruined roof of the land-owner's house. The sharp squeak of the rusty nails sounded in the darkness like a scream of a man under the knife. The concertina threw splashing merry tunes into the air, and the *chastushka** scattered in sprinkles over the somnolent village.

The girls' white handkerchiefs were to be seen in the lanes; a girlish whisper trembled agitatedly in the dark.

Night.

The windows of Dunay's hut were closed with shutters. Only a small light made its way through the chinks in narrow bands and fell on the road like soft, swinging feathers. One could hear Marinka laughing with her chuckling laugh.

Dariya climbed over the fence, dragging her belly with effort, and stood, looking in at the window for a long time. Gavrila Petrovitch was sitting at the table. His hair was combed, his cheeks clean shaven, his large red lips were smiling at two women at once. O God, how handsome he was! Dariya had never seen him so handsome as he was now; he had never smiled at her in that way.

"You wait, you cur, you wait!"

Gavrila Petrovitch took Mariana by her right hand, led her about the hut, telling her something, and she leant with her head against his shoulder, looked into his face with her soft, embracing eyes. Anna Polikarpovna stood near the table like a servant before her masters and bit her swollen lips gloomily. Gavrila Petrovitch took her, too, by her right hand. He pushed

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* *Couplets—half-village, half-factory songs.*

Mariana away. Mariana laughed with satisfied, chuckling laugh and re-adjusted the handkerchief on her head.

"You wait, you cur, you wait!"

Dariya breathed heavily at the window in the yard: she did not know how to satisfy her aching heart. She wanted to break all the window-panes, to strangle Mariana, to slap Anna Polikarpovna on both her cheeks, and to cry in a loud voice, so that all the street could hear her, in her bitter shame.

"Stop, stop, don't scream," Dariya persuaded herself, clenching her teeth more and more tightly in order to endure it to the end.

And Mariana sat down on the bed and called Gavrila Petrovitch with her eyes, like a kitten. He wanted to sit down near her, but Anna Polikarpovna was holding him back. Were Dariya's eyes deceiving her, or was it all happening in a dream? Gavrila Petrovitch put his arms around Anna Polikarpovna, and smiled with his red fleshy lips, so merrily, so joyously!

Suddenly Dariya saw Dunay standing on the threshold, in his pink under-trousers. He was wearing long woollen stockings, his shirt was tied round his waist with a narrow belt. His mouth was wide open, like that of a bird on a hot mid-day, and his lips were moving slightly. His left hand, pressed to his heart, trembled; his legs collapsed under him. Dunay fell down at the threshold, hitting the floor with his head. Gavrila Petrovitch jumped up from the bed, Mariana and Anna Polikarpovna jumped up too, and all three stood in a triangle near the prostrate Dunay. Then Anna Polikarpovna and Mariana led him again to the back room, put him on his bed with his face upwards, and locked the door of the back room on the outside. And Gavrila Petrovitch languidly stretched himself, stroking his moustache—How handsome he was!

Presently Dariya would break into the front room, slap Anna Polikarpovna on both her cheeks, strangle Mariana and scream in her bitter shame so that all the street would hear her. Her feet ascended the high flight of steps of themselves, her hands reached the door to open it, but the door was locked from inside. Dariya took a wooden yoke, lying on the ground, and hit the window with it. Gavrila Petrovitch ran out of the hut, Anna Polikarpovna and Mariana ran out, too, and stood in astonishment.

Dariya crouched behind the shed. She was petrified, she held her belly with both hands, and, fearfully, waited for them to start beating her, and for Gavrila Petrovitch to knock out her baby with his big fist, but he said :

"There are many fools in this world, and it isn't worth while paying any attention to them. It was my wife, I expect!"

Late in the night Dariya climbed back over the fence—worn out, languid, with her large aching belly, and walked home, taking little steps like a cow.

It was dark in the front room of Dunay's cottage. Gavrila Petrovitch was lying on Anna Polikarpovna's lap in the dark room, clasping her neck with his strong soldier's arms, and Anna Polikarpovna still could not satisfy her hungry swollen lips with kisses. Her hair was loose : the wire hair-pins had fallen out on the floor. She sat with her loose hair, throwing her hands up, and again fell with her head down on Gavrila Petrovitch's face, again clung with her hungry lips to the red fleshy lips of the man.

Gavrila Petrovitch was bored.

He raised himself up from her lap, pushed Anna Polikarpovna away with her loose hair, and strode about the room for a long time, his left boot creaking.

"What do you want then?" he asked and stopped near a chest, covered with a home-made rug, staring at a large square padlock.

"Only to love you!" answered Anna Polikarpovna : "And never give you over to anybody else, because you are mine. I've compromised myself through you, I've lost all shame in front of people. If all that is too little for you, I will do all you order me to. . ."

She opened the chest, took out Dunay's green satin shirt and Dunay's holiday belt with its heavy tassels, and hung them over Gavrila Petrovitch's shoulder. Then she fetched Dunay's breeches, that never had been worn, Dunay's leather high-legged boots, hung them over his other shoulder, and lit the lamp. Gavrila Petrovitch examined the new breeches and the green shirt by the light, then said in an offended tone :

"What's all this for?"

"You wear them. Dunay will die soon," painfully answered Anna Polikarpovna.

"How do you know?"

"I know. . ."

"Are you going to kill him?"

Anna Polikarpovna bowed her head, fixing her eyes on the floor.

Gavrila Petrovitch pulled the belt tightly around her neck. Caressing her with a deathly caress, and kissing her for the last time on her swollen lips, he said:

"Oh! You! Snake of my life! Good-bye!"

Anna Polikarpovna opened her mouth in fear, as if she were choking, brandished her arms, pushed Gavrila Petrovitch away, and suddenly squatted down, jerking her shoulders up. But he, pulling at the ends of the heavy festive belt more and more, said with a smile:

"I'll take and strangle you on this very spot!"

And she answered him with her tormented eyes:

"Strangle me, dearest, strangle me!"

But he went out, his left boot creaking. The breeches and the green shirt fell to the floor near the table.

Tears rolled down from Anna Polikarpovna's eyes.

For a few minutes she remained sitting, like a hen on her nest, then crawled to the chest, silently put her head down on the lid, and lay in that attitude: the holiday belt with its thick tassels tightened round her neck.

The clock ticked faintly, like a small hammer tapping against her temples, and under every little blow her troubled heart thumped more painfully, more bitterly, and the unshed tears dried in her eyes. After an hour Anna Polikarpovna had ceased crying altogether. Doing up her loose hair into a tight knot on her neck, she held the wire hair-pins in her teeth and stood with her angrily-knitted eye-brows and the bright flame of her fiery eyes, like a huge cat with a mouse in her white teeth. She seized a cup of unfinished tea from the table, threw the tea out over the threshold and flung the cup on the floor.

"Ah, Mariana, ah, you, bitch! Well, you wait!"

Anna Polikarpovna's swollen lips writhed and quivered; her hands grew strong and were flooded with unuttered anger. Now she knew where Gavrila Petrovitch had gone.

"Well, you wait!"

But Dunay was growing worse and worse in the small, stuffy back room. Death fumbled at his cold feet, breathed in his face with the decay of graveyard bones, yet could not kill the emaciated livid man in his stinking pink under-trousers. He went crawling about the dark room on all fours, looking for some water to swallow with his parched mouth. He found a large iron ladle, but there was no water in the pails, and there was no light in the hut—and Dunay sat on the floor, in the darkness, holding the large iron ladle, like a begger at the porch of a church. He only needed to start singing a psalm with his aching parched lips and to stretch his hand out, like a beggar, but Dunay remained silent, rocking his head, and climbed up on to the stove in his anguish. For a long time he scratched the stove with his nails, looking for the step, then suddenly tumbled off, fell, unmurmuring, down with a heavy thud and remained lying on the floor, his legs straddled apart.

No, it wasn't Death bending over him, it wasn't Death touching Dunay's shoulders : Anna Polikarpovna was sitting on the floor near him and, in a sudden fit of pity, stroked his hair with her snaky fingers. Dunay raised his injured head, and, strong with hatred, spat in her face. The spittle hung on her cheek for a few seconds, then, with the same hatred, she hit Dunay on the head with her fist, pressed his rattling chest with her knee, and caught hold of his scraggy goose-neck with her deft snaky fingers.

That was Death.

Dunay, like a wild beast, opened his quivering mouth, revealing his teeth, kicked his feet heavily against the floor, and with his tormented left eye, flooded with death-agony anguish, stared at the frightful woman with her white grinning teeth.

Anna Polikarpovna unclasped her fingers.

She turned Dunay over on the floor, like a feather, she gazed in his gaping mouth, soiled with spittle, then rushed aside in terror, pressing her hands to her heart, and ran about the room like a hunted wolf. Hastily she locked the door, hung two shawls over the two windows, looking into the yard. A minute later she unlocked the door, dragged the shawls off the windows, and put Dunay on the bed under his coloured blanket.

The church sexton struck an hour.

The geese on the river-bank cried faintly.

Night.

The dead man Dunay lay under the coloured blanket and stared with his unclosed left eye at the dark ceiling of the hut, as if he wished to examine all his life from beginning to end. And how plain it was that his was a hard life in the short flurried days : the bridge of his nose was wrinkled, his blue underlip hung down. For forty-two years he had run along various roads, panting over his pleasant holding, thinking of a farm, a large threshing-machine, and a great barn with a green roof. And it had seemed to him in those short, flurried days, when he thought of a great barn, that all life with all human joys would enter into that great barn, and he would lock it up there, with a huge padlock, so that it could not be knocked off with an axe, and all the beggars in the neighbourhood would take off their tattered caps before the barn and bow deeply to the corn locked up in it.

"This belongs to Ivan Semenytch!"

And now Dunay had gone away for ever from those short days, and Terentiy Moisseitch would have nobody to talk to about the eagles painted over on the railway-carriages. Only his white woollen stockings and his pink under-trousers peeped out from beneath the coloured blanket, and a large louse, suddenly grown quiet, sat on the matted hair of his little out-stuck beard.

A poor man is not at ease in the other world either, and through the dark fly-blown ceiling, through the sorrows that had come upon him in his last hour, Dunay stared with his unclosed eye into the sadness of the grave, because he was poor, poorer than anybody in the neighbourhood for ten miles around : he had only woollen stockings and pink under-trousers on his bent cold legs.

IV

Father Mikhail, the priest of Kanareevo, felt a weight on his heart and could not sleep. He sat thinking of the nature of sin, the nature of life, and what, after all, was meant by the expression "the meaning of existence on this earth". Many people had thought about it, many books had been written for those who did not think at all, and here was he, Father Mikhail, thinking again, but it came out different, or didn't come out at all.

A bore!

Night and boredom guarded the priest's house with its worn-out chairs, with its old, discoloured hat on the old side-board, where a yellow tea-spoon was lying. Night and boredom gazed in through the window with empty eyes, and the feeble light of a paraffin lamp on the table could not drive away the black shaggy night, shaking the tops of the trees by the windows. Father Mikhail stood before the wall, where a large mirror used to be, before which his wife used to let down her hair; in thought he saw the dainty horn hair-pins, he saw his wife; all his life he saw: how he used to get drunk at Christmas and Easter, how he used to fall down on the road, walking in the procession around the village, how he used to read the newspapers. Father Mikhail saw everything, and yet he was bored. Such things happen sometimes to a man.

It was boring.

Only to throw a canvas sack tied with a bast-string over his shoulder, to fetch a thick knotted stick and to set off walking along the lonely narrow roads and the high-ways, and to sing and laugh merrily! In that too there was to be found the meaning of existence on the earth.

It happens so sometimes.

Father Mikhail stood in front of the wall, his heavy head drooping. But when somebody began to knock insistently at the locked door outside, he took the dying lamp from the table, and shook it in front of his very nose, examining the burned-out paraffin, saw a drowned fly on the wick and three more flies burnt inside the lamp-glass, and walked to the threshold with his decrepit gait, his home-made slippers slapping on the floor.

"Who is there?"

"It's me, Father, I want you to give the Sacrament to a dying man. . ."

Entered Anna Polikarpovna wearing a black nun's handkerchief, sat down by the wall, casting down her tormented eyes, and said in a pitiful, tearful voice:

"Ivan Semenytch is dying, Father! . . It happened suddenly, about one o'clock."

"That is a common fate," answered Father Mikhail softly: "To every man his time is appointed. . ."

He walked long up and down past his hat, lying on the sideboard together with the yellow tea-spoon, shook his hair, driving away the useless thoughts, and suddenly halted.

"What a dark night it is to-night!"

"Very dark, Father!"

"Nobody will do you and me any harm?"

"Nobody, Father, I am not afraid. . ."

Anna Polikarpovna raised her meekly cast-down eyes filled with a warm smile to Father Mikhail, and Father Mikhail mumbled, embarrassed:

"You are without fear! There are rumours about you. . ."

"About me?"

"Yes."

"What rumours, Father?"

"Well, let us go! There are two kinds of rumours: false and true. . ."

They walked in silence along the dark street—just in front of them, above the belfry, a star fell out of the sky. Father Mikhail touched Anna Polikarpovna accidentally with his elbow, as though pushing her forward in the darkness, and drew back his shoulders in alarm. When they entered the cottage where the dead Dunay lay under the coloured blanket, the priest said meditatively, holding a small bundle with the Sacrament wafer in his hand:

"He did not wait for us. . ."

Anna Polikarpovna was crying. She knelt before the bed, stretching her arms across Dunay's breast, and could not calm herself.

Father Mikhail again said meditatively:

"He did not wait for us!"

He walked about the back room of the hut, examining the naked, blackened walls; peeped into the front room, gently opening the door. The festive belt with its heavy tassels was lying on the floor. . .

There was much sorrow in the short flurried days, there was much sorrow in the soul of Father Mikhail, the priest of Kanareevo, a widower for the last five years. One had to know everything: what is sin, what is life, and what, after all, meant the expression "the meaning of existence on this earth". He looked at the weeping Anna Polikarpovna, who had put her arms across the dead Dunay's breast, and asked her, kindly:

"Why did death come so suddenly?"

Father Mikhail saw the large astonished eyes, full of tears, the cheeks, red with tears, and, kindly, said again:

"A sudden death awakens suspicion. . . They won't bury him, Ivan Semenytch; it will have to be done through the officials. . ."

Anna Polikarpovna got up from the floor, placed herself in front of Father Mikhail, looked fixedly at him with her eyes, suddenly dry.

"What do you think, then, Father?"

"I do not think anything."

"Don't you believe me? So I killed him? Yes?"

"People may think that. . ."

"Won't you say that he just died?"

Father Mikhail stepped away before Anna Polikarpovna, fearfully wrapped himself in his coat, and she looked into his face with hard dry eyes—and, fearless, wildly impulsive, led him into the front room of the hut. Father Mikhail broke away from her, shook his head and, squeezing his old, discoloured hat in his hand, hurriedly walked out into the street.

Night.

Mariana and Gavrila Petrovitch met him in the street. Gavrila Petrovitch laughed loudly, gazing into Mariana's face:

"The pope!"

And Mariana laughed loudly, too.

"He has been at *her* house!"

"Ah, the devil! . ."

Gavrila Petrovitch snatched the revolver out of his deep pocket, shot merrily into the air, over the peaceful huts. Mariana laughed still more loudly, seizing Gavrila Petrovitch by the hands, and Father Mikhail, crossing himself in thought, said to himself in terror:

"I won't meddle in such a business! God be with them!"

V

Dunay was to be buried on Friday.

He lay, well washed, his hair combed, in a yellow fragrant coffin, under a frayed black pall; his hands were crossed on his chest; he was quiet. And it was no pain for him to float so through the transparent autumnal air, gently rocking in his coffin on the new embroidered towels; it held no terror. Earthly sorrows had gone, the short flurried days had stopped, broken off. Only a blue vein swelled on his forehead, and on his lips, under the dead moustache, the mournful joy of death plaintively hid. In vain cried Anna Polikarpovna in her black nun's kerchief, in vain she glanced askance with her cunning eyes. Nobody looked at Dunay, starting on his long journey, nobody saw the blue swollen vein on his forehead. There was Gavrushka Kochin, standing near the doors of the Ispolkom with a newspaper open in his hands; there were two Red soldiers loudly laughing at Father Mikhail in his short chasuble. Grishka Kazakov went riding past on a lean bay mare, and did not even take his cap off before Ivan Semenytch, starting on his long journey; and when he learnt that in the large coffin, under the black pall, Dunay himself was lying, he said jovially to his bay mare:

"He's ready now. That's put the lid on him!"

Terentiy Moisseitch with his heavy white beard came out of his hut on the road, stopped Father Mikhail and thrust in his hand a note requesting prayers for his dead relatives. And whilst Father Mikhail read the names, swinging his cold censer, out of which a light dry little piece of charcoal fell, Terentiy Moisseitch looked at the yellow fragrant coffin into the closed eyes of him who was going away, and sighed sadly:

"They've killed him, the swine!"

And then he thought, quite mollified:

"Remember him, O Lord, in Thy Heavenly Kingdom. . ."

But at once he spat angrily:

"Oh, the swine! They've killed a live man! . ."

During the funeral service at the church Father Mikhail officiated unwillingly. He and a blind beggar named Pavel responded to each other in two different voices, crying to God, who was far away, invisible, impossible for human mind to comprehend. A candle before the altar burned with a pallid light, a pallid autumn day looked through the darkened windows behind the iron gratings. And in the stony, muffled, taciturn box with ornamented cupolas stood the ancient saints, men-martyrs and women-martyrs, men-prophets and women-prophets, kings and bishops, who knew how to please God. Only the little old woman of Kanareevo, a great sinner, who did not know how to please God, lay humbly before the great fir-coffin, where Dunay was resting, and did not know in her goodness for whom she should pray : for herself, who had sinned beyond measure during her long life, or for Dunay who also had sinned beyond measure during his long life. And she prayed, in her goodness, for her relatives of the first generation, for her relatives of the second generation, and for the babies who had been laid in the grave without funeral rites.

It was irksome for Father Mikhail.

He looked at the little old woman rubbing the floor with the wrinkles of her yellow forehead. But he did not see her or her ancient sins, he saw his own anguish, so knotted and frightful. His anguish looked at him with the eyes of Anna Polikarpovna, with her broad haunches, her warm, swollen lips, half-open over her warm wily mouth, and the blind beggar Pavel implored in a pathetic, plaintive voice :

"O, Lord, have mercy upon us!"

From the cemetery Father Mikhail walked back slowly, with his shoulders shrugged as if he were cold. He was tired of walking with little paces about the large empty room, where his past life arose before him, he was tired, too, of looking through the windows at the empty, silent street. He sat down on a chair, gently tugging his beard with his fingers, covered his sad eyes with his moist hand and—

just so—

with his eyes closed he thought of woman, afraid of committing sin. Then he locked himself in his bed-room with its single window, and with his unsteady, trembling hand wrote in his diary : "O Lord, lead me across the sea of my doubts and do not let Thy sinful slave perish through the temptations sent by the Evil Spirit. . . My meditations on the meaning of existence on this earth are grievous to bear, burdensome to me also is my flesh, for there is no one to free me from suffering. . ."

Entered Terentiy Moisseitch supporting himself on an oaken staff, and heavily knocking it against the floor. Terentiy Moisseitch's eyes burned with a green light, his lips quivered. He sat down on a chest in front of Father Mikhail, and said in a heavy voice :

"Little Father, what does it all mean?"

Solemnly and sadly the clock struck behind the wall, like an evening convent chime, and a small birch leaf, torn away by the wind, lightly turned in the air before the window. The evening shadows stretched silently across the floor at their feet, and the cat walked cautiously past them, arching its fluffy back. Terentiy Moisseitch opened his trembling mouth and said again, burning Father Mikhail with the green light:

"Little Father, what does it all mean? Why, she killed him: we must re-open the grave. . ."

Father Mikhail looked thoughtfully at the old, white beard of Terentiy Moisseitch, counted over in thought the remaining days he was likely to live through on this earth, then in his thoughts saw Anna Polikarpovna with her warm swollen lips, and suddenly answered in a strange unrecognizable voice:

"One must depend on the human conscience, and nobody knows why death comes unexpectedly. . ."

Terentiy Moisseitch stubbornly knocked the floor with his oaken staff.

"No, little Father, that's not right! I have witnesses. . ."

"Who?"

"Gavrushka's wife Dariya. She saw with her own eyes two women strangling him. . ."

"Two?"

"Yes."

"Who was the second then?"

"My daughter Mariana. . ."

Father Mikhail went across to the window, and gazed a long time into the yellow dropping orchard where the dead leaves were slowly falling to the ground. In thought he saw Anna Polikarpovna, who had sinned for the sake of her life, saw Mariana, who helped her to sin, and, kindly, with a faint smile, said to Terentiy Moisseitch:

"May God judge them. . . It is difficult for us to judge other people, and one cannot raise the dead from their graves. . . It must be left as it is. If we go to the law-court with this case we may get into a good deal of trouble nowadays. . . We must leave it to the conscience of those who killed. . ."

And when Terentiy Moisseitch went away, without having obtained any satisfaction in his wrath, he met his daughter Mariana in the street. She was running along the street in her Sunday clothes, with a crimson shawl on her head, with her young nostrils quivering like those of a wild mare of the steppes. Mariana did not see her father, leaning on his oaken staff, she did not notice the sadness of old age on his face. Anna Polikarpovna called to her from the steps of her house :

"Mariana ! Mariana !"

Anna Polikarpovna stood on the steps in the dusk of the autumn evening, angry, furious, her hair dishevelled beneath her handkerchief, her lips bitten through with her sharp teeth, firmly pressed together.

"Well, you wait, bitch, I'll show you. . ."

Anna Polikarpovna clenched her little woman's fist as if she had been a man, stamped her foot, and looked angrily at Terentiy Moisseitch, who had stopped in the middle of the street :

"You just wait !"

In the night Gavrila Petrovitch came to her, and in the dark hut, without lighting the lamp, beat her on the head with his large soldier's fist. And when Anna Polikarpovna fell down on her knees before him and wanted to catch his high-heeled boots with her outstretched hands, he thrust his left boot into her mouth, silent, and no longer angry.

"Why did you kill your husband? Do you want to get me put in prison?"

Anna Polikarpovna remained silent, spitting red warm spittle off her bruised lips and trembled dog-fashion with a slight shiver. She got up from the floor and sat down on a bench, where she remained sitting like an obscure enigmatic phantom, heavily shaking her head with its dishevelled hair. Then Gavrila Petrovitch, overflowed with unexpected pity, caressingly stroked her dishevelled hair with his heavy soldier's hand, and caressingly said in a changed tone :

"I should like to kill you altogether ! Do you hear? And I'll do it for certain, because otherwise you will murder me, too, as you murdered Dunay. But you must remember, Annushka, that I am not the man to be afraid of the poison you use for destroying cockroaches. And if I beat you to-night it's because I love you, you, bitch, love you more than my wife, more than Mariana, and more than any other woman I know. D'you hear? More than any other woman !"

Anna Polikarpovna remained silent.

"Are you angry?"

Still Anna Polikarpovna remained silent.

"Well you may be jealous of Mariana, jealous of all the women! But you know that I love you. . ."

Gavrila Petrovitch took Anna Polikarpovna in his arms and, silent, with his rage not yet quite appeased, lay her on the bed, in order to laugh at the foolish offended woman who would do anything for him, like a dog loving its master. But in the darkness he saw the savage eyes of a wild cat looking at him, in the darkness he caught sight of an upraised hand, and that hand suddenly struck Gavrila Petrovitch on the cheek, and again on the other cheek. Confused with shame and pain he jumped away from the bed, then rushed forward to smash the devilish woman on the spot, but she was no longer on the bed, and no longer in the room: she was running through the gateway, out into the street with hair dishevelled.

VI

And Dariya Kochina, who had sinned for the sake of her life, tossed about on her bed in her tiny hut—worn out, torn asunder, her mouth gaping, and in her death-agony anguish greedily gasped in the rotten air with the heavy smell of dung from the yard. She desired the joy of deliverance from her fifth child, in order to retain Gavrila Petrovitch, who ran after the strange, slim-waisted women, but a bitter sorrow was approaching Dariya: Death itself approached her and coldly looked into her face. Archipka crawled about the floor, and cried bitterly in a strained, broken voice. Dariya did not hear Archipka's crying, she tossed about on her bed, seized with fear and pain, weakly whispering with her white lips:

"O, God!"

But God did not come, and he had no need of the ridiculous dirty peasant-woman, streaming blood. Only a black saint on a black board in the fore-corner gazed at her from the shrine like a black stain, and the unconscious Dariya said to the black saint without eyes:

"Little uncle, my dear, help me for Christ's sake!"

Darkness.

Night.

Silence.

Archipka climbed up on the bed to his silenced mother, scratched her cheeks with his warm fingers, like a hungry blind kitten, and loudly cried:

"Ma-a-mma!"

Dariya pressed him to her heart to stop his crying, stifled him with her coarse blanket to prevent his kicking, and—

just so—

with bodies closely pressed mother and son lay on the bed, crushed with anguish and suffering. . .

The old woman Ipatova came in—a black toothless toadstool—and poured some charmed water into Dariya's gaping mouth. She laid an ancient brass crucifix on Dariya's chest, and whispered mournfully:

"O sweetest Jesus, save us!"

"O most Holy and Sorrowful Mother of God, save us!"

"O most Holy Father Nicholas, save us!"

"Sleep, Dariushka, sleep, and you, Archipushka, don't cry! Your mother is ill, your mother wants to go to bye-bye, and don't you kick. . ."

The old woman Ipatova lit a small piece of yellow candle in front of the black saint without eyes, drove the cat away from the table, tried with her bent finger to reach the oil at the bottom of a shrine-lamp, hanging on three sooty strings, but the oil had dried out a long time ago, and, instead, there were a few dead flies lying at the bottom.

"O God!"

The wick of the yellow piece of candle spluttered, the fine arrow of the flickering flame plunged like a sharp spear into the insensible heart of the saint, trembled between his darkened eyes —and suddenly went out.

"O Lord, have mercy upon us!"

Night.

Darkness.

Silence.

Again the cat climbed on to the table, and instead of the candle its sharp yellow eyes gazed from the table, and its plaintive voice was heard:

"Mia-oo. . ."

It was the Lord who had put out the lighted piece of candle, because He did not wish to forgive Dariya, who had sinned, and did not want to accept the woman's repentance. The old woman Ipatova struck the damp matches one after another, the matches would not light, and the cat rushed away from the table in fear and knocked a wooden salt-box down on the floor.

Dread.

Gloom.

A thin little voice beneath her feet as though the old woman Ipatova had stepped on a mouse.

"O God!"

It was the demons diverting themselves, and other evil spirits puffing with their black lips.

But when the little piece of candle lit up again in the fore-corner, Dariya cried loudly in her delirium, throwing the ancient brass crucifix off her chest on to the floor.

"Ma-amma!"

And Archipka screamed, catching at Dariya:

"Ma-amma!"

But Dariya's mamma had been lying for a long time in the cold earth, behind the little low church, in a cemetery thickly sown with graves. She had worked for forty-two years and had held her peace, all the time. She had cried in secret and held her peace. She had lived with two husbands during her short life. They had both beaten her: on work days and on holidays, when they were drunk and when they were sober. They had beaten her in anger and without, just as they had beaten horses, out of idleness. And she, Dariya's mother, had smiled at them with her kind sheepish eyes, had called them by their Christian names and their father's names, had wept in secret and held her peace. Then, without telling anybody about it, without saying good-bye to anyone, quite unexpectedly, in her forty-second year, she had gone away to the cemetery, thickly sown with graves, behind the little low church. It was better there. In spring and summer the calves wandered there, the traveller-beetles, losing their way in the thick grass, peacefully droned all day long, and the bustling bees, living in Pavel Ivanovitch's apiary, gathered sweet honey from the little yellow flowers growing on the peasants' graves. . .

When Dariya walked behind her mother's coffin she was still quite young then, and had just drunk the first drop of a mother's sorrow, and the day was a warm spring-day. The church bells had rung sadly to meet Dariya's mother, and the frightened pigeons had flown softly in circles about the belfry. Dariya had shed bitter tears, then—she had not cried just for appearance, she cried because she was left alone—a young mother with a baby—and there was nobody in the whole world to take pity on her. Only mothers can truly pity! Only mothers have such hearts—a huge well—and it is not possible to exhaust mother-love and pity in a year, nor in two, nor in a lifetime. . .

Dariya had cried afterwards, too, but Gavrila Petrovitch had said to her:

"Stop that whimpering, will you? You're not a baby. . ."

And the same thing had happened to Dariya that had happened to her mother: Gavrila Petrovitch beat her in anger and without, in "love" and in "fun", and she had smiled at him with her kind sheepish eyes, like those of her mother. Then she had drunk the second drop of a mother's sorrow—had conceived a second child. And in the short summer nights, in the long winter nights two babies had tortured Dariya like two beloved baby-snakes: sucking her milk, sucking her blood, her young, rosy cheeks, her blue girlish eyes. After a year, another drop of mother's sorrow: Dariya had conceived her third child, put to her breast the third beloved little snake. Her cheeks had grown yellow; her eyes, which had never enough sleep, had grown dull. Her belly began to hang down like an empty bag, her breasts hung, too, with blackened nipples, and, soiled with excrement, babies' swaddling-clothes and babies' mouths, Dariya had become foolishly ridiculous, dirty, and always wanting only one thing—Sleep.

Gavrila Petrovitch alone would sleep soundly of nights, turning his face to the wall, and he did not hear how Dariya would cry in secret, the foolish, dirty Dariya, tortured by the babies. And now he did not wish to see Dariya at all, because the beloved little snakes had sucked her blood, her rosy cheeks, and her blue eyes. And the whole of Dariya's life had been spent in just giving birth to bawling children every year, and every year dragging them down to the cemetery, behind the low church. And now she, who wished to have back her lost beauty in order to please her husband, as she had pleased him when she was a girl, now she was dying from loss of blood. But why had God arranged it so, that all the misfortune, unhappiness, and suffering had fallen on the woman? Why should only the woman give birth to children, and scream like a wild beast in the pangs of child-birth, and weep over the new-born babies, and spend sleepless nights because of them? What kind of God was this, who would be so cruelly, so painfully unfair to woman? Exasperation against a cruel God welled up in Dariya's breast in a black wave, and, suddenly inflamed with the anger of her suffering, she tore the ancient brass crucifix off her breast, where it had been placed by the old woman Ipatova, and screamed in horror:

"Ma-a-mma!"

And Archipka, frightened by his mother, screamed too:

"Ma-a-mma!"

But mamma was not there. Father Mikhail stood near Dariya's bed in his old wax-bespattered stole, and did not himself believe in what he was doing, but out of habit, in his customary voice, said:

"You don't confess to me, I am only the witness. . ."

Dariya did not know what to begin with, as she had been sinful from her very childhood; she had committed the sin of being born a girl, a woman, and all her life, like a thick green apple-tree, covered with apples, was covered with innumerable sins, voluntary and involuntary. Father Mikhail listened to her, and he felt that he was suffocating in the little hut, filled with sins, suffering, and sorrow; he squeezed his trembling beard in his fist, he saw the tears rolling out of Dariya's eyes, and said painfully:

"Don't cry!"

And Dariya raised herself a little, and saw before her not a priest, not Father Mikhail—no. She saw a healthy man, to whom God had not given a woman's sufferings, and stretching out her neck, she angrily hissed into his out-stuck beard:

"Go away! I don't want to . . . Go! . ."

And Father Mikhail said to the old woman Ipatova:

"She is delirious. The Sacrament cannot be administered to her. . ."

And when he folded his stole on the table, Gavrila Petrovitch entered and gazed fixedly at Father Mikhail. Father Mikhail gazed at him, and in their eyes there was amazement, fatigue, and secret unspoken fear. Gavrila Petrovitch was the first to overcome his weakness, and said sarcastically:

"Did you give her the Sacrament?"

"No," answered Father Mikhail.

"Why not?"

"She is delirious."

"Well, get out of here, I don't believe in your incantations."

The old woman Ipatova went away together with Father Mikhail: he walked in front of her and she followed him. At the doorway she stopped, spat, threatened Gavrila Petrovitch with her crooked finger, like a bird's claw, but he only waved his hand at her in vexation, and slowly, very slowly, walked about the tiny room of the hut, his left boot creaking. Yes, he was an unfortunate man. He had married early, when he was an ordinary peasant lad, and now he was a Commissar, a member of the Communist Party, but he had a dirty wife and a snotty-nosed son whom he always wanted to hit on his red calf-head with his fist.

Did he want a wife of this sort? Was it right for him to live in such a hut? But more truly he did not want any wife at all, because Communists didn't believe in having wives, particularly such wives as Dariya, who could not make a speech. Of course, that was freedom, and a man, who is "conscious", must understand that. . . Seeing Archipka with his mouth gaping, Gavrila Petrovitch, flooded with unspeakable anger at him, shouted, as he shouted at rich peasants in his Executive Committee office:

"Be quiet!"

Then he stopped near Dariya:

"What's the matter?"

Gavrila Petrovitch's voice was stern and harsh; the fingers of his hands quivered nervously. He strode twice up and down the hut, then stopped again near the bed, and suddenly said in quite a different tone:

"You're a fool!"

Dariya remained silent.

"You may die now!" Gavrila Petrovitch went on angrily: "D'you think I shall be sorry for you? Nothing of the sort! Who did this devilish trick to you?"

Dariya's dark, tired eyes flashed with anger. Suddenly, in a moment, she grew strong and healthy, resolutely got up from the bed in only her nightdress, went to the closet, and suddenly, in a moment, sat down on the floor in the closet, and asked in a plaintive, frightened voice:

"Gavrushka. . . The hospital. . ."

For a few seconds Gavrila Petrovitch stood in amazement in the middle of his tiny hut, whilst an importunate thought obstinately penetrated his bursting brain:

"Let her die! Let her die!"

But another, despite Gavrila Petrovitch, bent his strong back, stretched out his arms, and his arms carried Dariya under the arm-pits, laid her on the bed, and carefully covered her with the coarse blanket:

"Sleep! To-morrow! I haven't time to-day. . ."

And it seemed to Dariya—only for one minute—that easily and joyously she was lifted upwards, on his strong arms, as though she were lying in a soft lulling cradle; she did not wish, she was terrified of leaving those arms, but the arms unclasped themselves, and Dariya dropped down, losing consciousness. . .

(*The story is left unfinished at this point*).

Alexander Nievierov,

Translated by Lydia Jiburtovitch.

CAUSERIE

. . . party on the stage of the Earl Carroll Theatre on February 23. At this party Joyce Hawley, a chorus-girl, bathed in the nude in a bathtub filled with alleged wine.—*New York Times.*

Cats walk the floor at midnight; that enemy of fog,
The moon, wraps the bedpost in receding stillness; sleep
Collects all weary nothings and lugs away the towers,
The pinnacles of dust, that feed the subway.

What stiff unhappy silence waits on sleep
Struts like an officer; tongues next door bewitch
Themselves with divination; I like a melancholy oaf
Beg the nightly pillow with impossible loves.
For abnegation folds hands, crossed like the knees
Of the complacent tailor, stitches cloaks of mercy
For the backs of obsessions. . .

Winter like spring no less
Tolerates the air: the wild pheasant meets innocently
The gun: night flouts illumination with meagre impudence.

In such serenity of equal fates, why has Narcissus
Urged the brook with questions? Merged with the element,
Speculation suffuses the meadow with drops to tickle
The cow's gullet; grasshoppers drink the rain.
Antiquity breached mortality with myths.

Narcissus is vocabulary; Hermes decorates
A cornice on the Third National Bank. Vocabulary
Becomes confusion, decoration a blight; the Parthenon
In Tennessee stucco, art for the sake of death. Now
(The bedpost receding in stillness) you brush your teeth
"Hitting on all thirty-two"; scholarship pares
The nails of Catullus, sniffs his sheets, restores
His "passionate underwear"; morality disciplines the other
Person; snakes speak the idiom of Rousseau; Prospero
Serves Humanity in steam-heated universities, three
Thousand dollars a year;—for simplicity is obscene.
Sunlight topples indignant from the hill.

In every railway station everywhere, every lover
Waits for his train. He cannot hear. The smoke
Thickens. Ticket in hand he pumps his body
Toward lower six, for one more terse ineffable trip,
His very eyeballs fixed in disarticulation. The berth
Is clean; no elephants, vultures, mice, or spiders
Distract him from nonentity; for his metaphors are dead.
Notescatque magis mortuus atque magis,
Nec tenuem texens sublimis aranea telam. . .

More sanitation is enough, enough remains: dreams
Do not end—a continuity beyond the stint of thought.
For intellect is a mansion where waste is without drain;
A corpse is your bedfellow, your great-grandfather dines
With you this evening, on a cavalry horse. Intellect
Connives with heredity, creates fate as Euclid geometry,
By definition.

"The sunlit bones in your house
Are immortal in the titmouse
They trip the feet of grandma
Like an afterthought each day.
These unseen sunlit bones,
They may be in the cat
That eats them in the titmouse
That startles them in grandma,
But look at this or that
They meet you every way."

For Pelops' and Tantalus' successions were at once simpler,
If perplexed, and less subtle than we think. Heredity
Proposes love, love exacts language, and we lack
Language. When shall we speak again? When shall
The sparrow dusting the gutter sing? When shall
This drift with silence meet the sun? When shall I wake?

ALLEN TATE.

PAUL VALÉRY

"Essayons de notre seule curiosité pour nous éclairer le système caché de quelque individu de la première grandeur."
Introduction à la méthode de Léonard de Vinci.

THE work of M. Paul Valéry possesses a double interest: his poetry is not only of remarkable beauty, but it is the product of a mind—perhaps we should say of an intelligence—which is essentially metaphysical in character and has undergone the discipline of prolonged studies in mathematics. One takes for granted that the modern poet will be an *intellectual*—that he will have a high degree of general culture and some acquaintance with other arts; the fact that M. Valéry is a musician and an amateur of architecture does not surprise us. But the addition to his equipment of the ability to understand the mathematics of Einstein, and some knowledge of the world of business, in which he is said to have been engaged in some capacity, stimulate a special curiosity as to his verse. For these elements, modern science and modern affairs, are precisely those which have given its character to the modern world and are responsible for the monstrous and beautiful constructions amid which we live. The pressure of this world has reduced poetry in our time to a position of amiable futility upon its margin, or, in a few minds here and there, to a registration of the stresses under which they suffer. Perhaps the modern world involves the eventual extinction of poetry, perhaps it merely offers a new field for triumphs of a new order; what is certain is that with the modern world poetry has in some way to make terms; it can no longer continue to disregard it.

M. Valéry offers the spectacle of the reconciliation of these evident antagonists; he includes with apparent ease elements which seem heterogeneous. The inclusion of diverse elements goes even further in his case, and extends to *le monde,* and recently to the Académie Française. One may wonder whether the intelligence that is capable of so many modes does not include too much: whether the number of elements combined will not result in a sort of neutralization. And in reading M. Valéry's poems, if one is ungracious enough to retain, in face of patterns so exquisite and a texture so marvellously wrought, one's curiosity as to the more general problem of this reconciliation of the opposites that torment our age, it is with a certain disappointment that one perceives that the poetry bears no very evident indication of having been written in the twentieth century at all.

The problem of the connexion between diverse activities posed itself early to M. Valéry, in the form of the relation between art and science. After the publication in early youth of a few poems very much in the manner of Mallarmé (collected in the "Album des Vers Anciens" in 1920), he remained silent for a period of nearly twenty years. The research in which he was engaged at this time is indicated in "L'Introduction à la Méthode de Léonard de Vinci", written in 1894, which has as its object the attempt to define that central attitude starting from which the enterprises of knowledge and the operations of art are equally possible, and "Une Soirée avec M. Teste", which presents in the terrifying figure of M. Teste (a metaphysical monster, as Mr. Eliot has called him) a mind which has reached such a degree of consciousness that the contemplation of its own processes is a more satisfying activity than the act of creation. The second essay is later than the first—it carries to a further point ideas which are implicit in "L'Introduction", and taken with M. Valéry's subsequent silence of twenty years seems to indicate that the state postulated of Leonardo, from which the operations of science and art are equally possible, is a state from which neither is in fact attempted. But the ideas which these writings express are central to M. Valéry's mind and to his poetry. They come up again in "Eupalinos ou l'Architecte", a Socratic dialogue in which Socrates explains how in his youth he was torn between two impulses—*construire* and *connaître,* and how the latter won the day, so that he became a philosopher instead of an architect. And in a preface to a new edition to "L'Introduction", written in 1919, M. Valéry provides a very brilliant re-statement of its essential theme, which this time is put in terms more clearly related to M. Teste and his super-conscious consciousness. Its argument may briefly be set out as follows :—

M. Valéry envisages the creative mind pausing from its work for a moment and regarding itself in its totality. It discovers itself a slave to common necessities and realities and yet possessing a knowledge which is above these. It feels the necessity of discovering "points de repère tellement placés que sa vie particulière et cette *vie generalisée* qu'il s'est trouvée se composent". Further consideration, the fluctuations of psychical equilibrium, dreams, illnesses, modifications of the sensibility, lead to the conclusion that all ordinary reality is only *one* among many possible solutions of universal problems. For the imaginary thinker who has reached this point, the universe reduces itself to two essentially unknown entities : "Soi et X". His position is like that of an invisible spectator in the darkness of a theatre—within the narrow frame of the brilliantly lighted stage move the changing forms of the Sensible, the Intelligible, the Possible. "Soi" is consciousness—and as the character of consciousness is a perpetual detachment from the passing flux about it, the man of intelligence should reduce himself scientifically to an indefinite refusal to be any particular thing. The highest state of the intelligence is that in which *personality* is obliterated and the consciousness is a consciousness of consciousness in its most universal form—pure and dehumanized.

It is not necessary to examine closely the metaphysical basis or validity of these ideas—our interest is in the relation between them and M. Valéry's poetry. The state of consciousness thus desiderated is an ideal state—we do not suppose that M. Valéry any more than Leonardo himself has actually reached this pinnacle, which reminds us remarkably of Pater's point at which all the emotions were to meet and where we were invited to burn with a hard gem-like flame. But M. Valéry's silence for so many years seems to indicate an effort to reach this state and may well be connected with the view of M. Teste (who did reach it) that the act of creation is a kind of declension, a sudden flaw in the all-embracing serenity of the intellectual comprehension, just as the sun in "Ebauche d'un Serpent" is a "faute éclatante" and the universe a "défaut dans la pureté du Non-Etre".* This descent to creation took place in 1917 with the publication of "La Jeune Parque"; and "Le Cimetière Marin", which (with most of the poems comprising the volume "Charmes") was written about the same period, has as its subject the abandonment (perhaps temporary) of the attitude of M. Teste. It is worth examination from this point of view.

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* This image recurs constantly in M. Valéry's poetry. Thus in *Le Cimetière Marin* the poet is a *défaut du grand diamant du Midi;* and again . . . . . . *rendre la lumière*
Suppose d'ombre une morne moitié.

> "Beau ciel, vrai ciel, regarde-moi qui change !
> Après tant d'orgueil, après tant d'étrange
> Oisiveté, mais pleine de pouvoir,
> Je m'abandonne à ce brillant espace".

Not, however, without regret for the abandoned attempt to reach a pure consciousness from which personality has, as it were, been exhausted :

> "O pour moi seul, à moi seul, en moi-même,
> Auprès d'un cœur, au sources du poème,
> Entre le vide et l'événement pur,
> J'attends l'écho de ma grandeur interne,
> Amère, sombre et sonore citerne,
> Sonnant dans l'âme un creux toujours future !"

The Leonardo-Teste state of consciousness, we have said, is one from which the operations of science and art, though equally possible, are not in fact attempted. It is really a state to which both have become *indifferent*. The universe in a sense has become indifferent, the Teste-consciousness is aware of all the categories under which its phenomena, including his own actions and thoughts, can be grouped and regarded and cannot choose one any more than another. This is what gives to the world the terrible immobility of Zeno's arrow which is referred to in this poem ; this is the *ennui de vivre* of which Socrates speaks in "L'Ame et la Danse". Socrates' remedy is *l'ivresse due à des actes ;* the poem concludes with an act : the abandonment of the state of stasis, the return to life

> "Le vent se lève ! Il faut tenter de vivre !"

And the poem itself is the act by which the abandonment has been achieved. It is thus clearly cathartic for its author, and if one likes to make this the test of poetry, it passes the test. It is of remarkable beauty : the following invocation to the sea is an admirable specimen of the Valerian style and imagery :

> "Oui ! Grande mer de délires douée ;
> Peau de panthère et chlamyde trouée
> De mille et mille idoles du soleil,

Hydre absolue, ivre de ta chair bleue,
Qui te remords l'étincelante queue
Dans un tumulte au silence pareil."

The Teste-consciousness may be abandoned and the man of intelligence descend humbly to the writing of verse, but the writing of verse has now got to be motivated. Since poetic activity is only one of the many mental activities which are subsumed within the contemplation of consciousness it has no final validity about it. Hence we have M. Valéry's recognition that poetry is not the function of his existence ("je ne suis pas un poète, mais le Monsieur qui s'ennuie"), and his pretence—which is not altogether to be dismissed as merely an elegant pretence—that he writes only because he has a certain expertness in the engaging and difficult game of writing good verses.

There is therefore no personal emotion and little emotion at all in these poems; they have the calmness with which Classicism is usually associated, and what is vaguely termed the problem of values never raises in them its disturbing head. Their construction, their very existence, are determined by formal considerations; with the exception of "La Jeune Parque", which traces the passage from one state of consciousness to another, they scarcely exhibit any internal movement: the stanzas are the varied and successive solutions of the problem of expressing a number of related ideas in forms of the maximum verbal effectiveness. The exclusion of emotion does not, of course, involve any conclusion that the result is not poetry: "emotion" is a suspect term whose continued employment is only justified by its convenience; and the intensity with which the consciousness in these poems regards the ideas which it forms corresponds closely with the "emotional" intensity with which the practice of other poets has familiarized us. The eye on the idea is not very different from the eye on the object. It follows, however, from the consideration of the universe as consisting of the opposed principles, *Soi et X,* that the world of the senses, the everyday world of actuality, is not rendered in M. Valéry's poetry: there is no attempt to make the reader see or feel with the intensity of a personal memory. But there is an entirely personal vision which gives a very individual quality to his images; on this subject it is best to quote M. Valéry's own words:

"La plupart de gens voient par l'intellect bien plus souvent que par les yeux . . . Sachant horizontal le niveau des eaux tranquilles, ils méconnaissent que la mer est *debout* au fond de la vue; si le bout d'un nez, un éclat d'épaule, deux doigts trempent au hasard dans un coup de lumière qui les isole, eux ne se font jamais à n'y voir qu'un bijou neuf, enrichissant leur vision." The characteristic of this vision is that it isolates from the world of phenomena an aspect which is entirely alien to the *nature* of the thing seen: it has no relation to the concept of the object or to its function. To the Valerian consciousness the universe is indifferent, its appearances can be merged into more general propositions: "toutes choses se substituent". The categories in which the object is ranged can therefore be disregarded, and what is seen picked clean out from among them. There is an obvious analogy between this vision and the disinterested vision of the symbolists, particularly that of the greatest of the symbolists—Rimbaud. But with Rimbaud the appearances of the actual world are not thus dissociated; they are merely used in combinations which do not exist in the actual world for the construction of a kind of counter-reality, more exciting than everyday reality:

> "Puis l'orage changea le ciel jusqu'au soir :
> Ce furent des pays noirs, avec des perches,
> Des colonnades sous la nuit bleue, des gares."

With M. Valéry there is no such attempt at construction, the centre of each of his poems is in abstraction, though an abstraction which is constantly illuminated by these "bijoux"—an abstraction which may be regarded, to borrow another of M. Valéry's phrases, as "le centre de masse d'une bague ou d'un système planétaire". The "bijoux" are a kind of illustrative detail. Thus of Eve's hair, in "Ebauche d'un Serpent":

> "l'or ardent de ta laine",

and in the same poem the following lines describe Eve, the great heavy-breasted giantess, about to pluck the fruit:

> "Le marbre aspire, l'or se cambre !
> Ces blondes bases d'or et d'ambre
> Tremblent au bord du mouvement ! . . .
> Elle chancelle, la grande urne . . . . ."

The centre of M. Valéry's poems being placed in abstraction the resources of verbal melody are employed as a kind of substitute for the sensuality which has disappeared from the content: it appears in the form. M. Valéry has written some of the most beautiful lines in the French language, but it may be objected against his verse that the verbal melody is often overweighted and the orchestration irrelevant to the theme. The verses are too charged with a deliberate art: "je vois trop la main de Pascal", says M. Valéry of that writer's carefully cadenced distresses, and his own art is an art which shows its hand. The Valerian verse is generally a triumph rather than a miracle. But some of the triumphs must command unqualified admiration—"La Jeune Parque" is especially rich in these:

> "Le houle me murmure l'ombre d'une reproche,
> On retire ici-bas, dans ses gorges de roche,
> Comme chose décue et bue amèrement
> Une rumeur de plainte et de resserrement."
>
> "Si l'âme intense souffle, et renfle furibonde
> L'onde abrupte sur l'onde abbatue, et si l'onde
> Au cap tonne, et me trempe à l'insulte des jeux
> Immortels . . ."

and this from an early poem describing a woman asleep:

> "Au hasard! A jamais, dans le sommeil sans hommes
> Pur des tristes éclairs de leurs embrassements
> Elle laisse rouler les grappes et les pommes
> Puissantes, qui pendaient aux treilles d'ossements,
>
> Qui riaient, dans leur ambre appelant les vendanges,
> Et dont le nombre d'or de riches mouvements
> Invoquait la vigueur et les gestes étranges
> Que pour tuer l'amour inventent les amants. . ."

"Le Cimetière Marin" is, perhaps, the finest of M. Valéry's poems because he is there expressing directly an *angoisse métaphysique* which is personal to himself: it is more human, without being less metaphysical, than the rest of his verse. It is rivalled by "Ebauche d'un Serpent" in which there is continuously present a pictorial, almost a narrative interest, which is not frequent in M. Valéry's verse. Of "La Jeune Parque" it may be enough to say that its obscurities, which are very real, are rather of expression than of idea: essentially the poem is engaged with the ideas in regard to consciousness which have found expression in the prose writings and come up again in "Le Cimetière Marin" and the fragments of "Narcisse".

What is the significance of this poetry, so individual, so limited, and so definitely successful within its limits, in relation to the problems with which a modern poet is faced? It seems at first sight to have the significance merely of an exception. The degree of culture and the cast of mind required to envisage the problem posed in the "Introduction à la Méthode de Leonard de Vinci" are unique—the *données* of the problem are exceptional and its solution remote from our interest, except for our interest in the brilliance with which it is discussed. Nevertheless, it is on the margin of what we may call the modern problem : it is not essentially different in nature; if we change the terms and make the question how poetry is to be reconciled, not so much with the mental processes that have given us modern science and mathematics, as with modern culture, with modern knowledge in the widest sense, with modern activity, and with the modern world, the relevance of the problem is apparent at once.

We may put the modern problem in this way : the poet if he is, as he must be, a man of intelligence, is compelled to form with the complexity of the modern world a host of relations, not merely physical or social but also intellectual, which are not easily resolvable into a unity. He is torn in a number of directions : he has to exist upon a great many planes of being. So has the ordinary person, but the difficulty for the modern poet is to take up an attitude in which these activities are synthesized. He has to reach a point from which they can be viewed in some relation and seen to fit together, a point from which the *whole* of the energies which seem to be dissipated in them can be transferred to poetic processes. The modern can never avoid the suspicion that whatever attitude he takes up is only a partial expression of himself and a partial activity. And he has no scale of values which would justify him in concluding that this part is the most important, that this activity is the fundamental activity. Without this great poetry is impossible.

Regarded in this light, M. Valéry's problem is the modern problem, but his solution is a negative solution. Instead of his poetry being an activity which is the justification, the vital thread connecting his other activities, it is an activity which he isolates entirely; he keeps it pure. It is a kind of play, in which it is possible to employ all the mental powers, but only to ends and under conditions which are absolutely unrelated to these other activities. The steam-hammer is used to crack walnuts with an extreme delicacy of pressure, and we get the theory of poetry as the art of writing verses. There is thus an absence of any organic link with experience, of any inflow of material which the poetic engines convert into their product. Therefore the poetry remains unmodified: there is none of that internal change under the influence of time and experience which makes the work of some poets—Shakespeare, Rimbaud—so beautiful and so strange: that modification of the mind which yet remains the same mind. With M. Valéry there is only a modification of style, from Mallarmé, with an occasional hint of Baudelaire, to such Racinian lines as these from the last of the fragments of "Narcisse":

> "Dieux! de l'auguste jour, le pâle et tendre reste
> Va des jours consumés joindre le sort funeste."

The lack in M. Valéry's poetry of certain qualities—qualities which one is inclined to say modern poetry *ought* to have—is involved in his convention that expression, the game of writing good verses, is all that counts. We must distinguish, however, between the convention and the poetry; a convention imposes limitations on the poetry but does not account for the poetry itself—it is rather the price which the poetry has to pay for its existence. The gap between poetic impulse and poetic achievement has to be bridged, and M. Valéry has got across safely and with great elegance on this narrow plank. We cannot deny the positive achievement, even while we still remain conscious that the need and opportunity for the exercise of real engineering skill are as pressing as ever.

SAMUEL HOARE.

SUMMERTIME

THE most foolish things happen to people in the summer. For instance, this summer a most foolish thing happened to Mr. Joseph Laurel, and yet, of course, in a way it was a revelation, too. After playing tennis with Beatrice Hammond most of the summer, he went down to stay with her sister in the country. He dislikes tennis very much, but at the courts where they play there are on a sloping bank some lovely rhododendrons and some large yellow flowers rather like them, growing on bushes, too, and with petals thick like wax, and a heavy scent of honeysuckle. After about one set, Mr. Laurel flings his racquet on the grass and himself on the bank, and, with his hands under his head, he looks up at the sky or at the people on the courts. And there is something particularly luxurious about this, which the other players appear not to understand.

Beatrice is an extraordinarily good player. I suppose she plays to keep young, because she is well over thirty. Tennis is, if one might say so, very becoming to her. She is tall and dark and it always seems like a sudden revelation of her personality to see her in white. And she moves like a winged fury behind the nets and shoots stinging balls at people in a way that Mr. Laurel can quite understand other people finding rather fascinating.

She told him that her sister had invited him, but I should think the invitation really came from her. She said that they wanted some one to make up a set with her niece and her niece's cousin and that she did not dare invite anyone who played well, because Leonora played so badly. And Mr. Laurel, who prides himself on his bad tennis, decided to go.

He had been there before when the sister's husband was alive. They had a rather charming house with a nice tennis court. The daughter Leonora had rather curious pale brown hair, the colour of smoke in a modern painting. When he saw her first she wore it down her back in ringlets. Now this time she had put it up in an almost old-fashioned way which made her look older than she was. She had only just left school. The cousin who was there was also very young, a tall dark boy, very alert and only just out of the sixth form.

Beatrice drove Mr. Laurel down there and he was a little bored at first, but they had tea outside in the garden. Leonora sat opposite him in a green basket chair, near a rose tree, whose pink roses made her hair look strange. The cousin sat on the grass handing the cakestand round by balancing the whole thing from underneath on his hand, and, though Mrs. Chalen asked Mr. Laurel one or two tiresome questions, all the same, the charm of the garden began to make an impression on him.

"I want to ask your advice about Leonora," said Mrs. Chalen, turning anxiously to him, "I don't know what to let her do".

"Has she any particular talents?" he asked.

"None that I know anything about," said her mother looking at Leonora severely. Mr. Laurel looked at Leonora, too, and she smiled back to him. She had a curious small square smile which was very attractive, though perhaps also a little heartless.

"She can't dance," said Basil, her cousin, not intending to insult her, but simply to eliminate one possibility.

"Or play tennis," said Beatrice a little impatiently.

"Will you have some more chocolate cake?" said Leonora.

"Thank you," said Mr. Laurel, taking some. "I think she should go to an art school," he said to her mother.

"Do you really think so?" said she, "Can you paint, dear?"

"I don't know," said Leonora.

"Oh, that doesn't matter," said Mr. Laurel, smiling at her, "some artist will marry her because he wants to paint her hair, and they will live happily ever afterwards".

"Yes," said Leonora with innocent approval.

"You really think so?" said her mother, smiling a little doubtfully.

"Undoubtedly," said Mr. Laurel.

And thus her fate was decided, for sure enough she has gone to an art school.

"I am going to be a dancer," said Basil.

Mr. Laurel does not remember much what happened that evening, but it was very delightful to see the darkness come slowly down over the garden and the roses.

However, that night, just as he was dropping off to sleep, he heard a little tap at his door, and then it slowly opened and Leonora's head appeared.

"Can I come in?" she whispered.

"Yes," he whispered back.

She came in and Basil came after her.

"We are a deputation to you," she said.

"We are pleased to hear you," said Mr. Laurel leaning back on his pillow, "Switch on the light".

She sat on the edge of his bed. She wore a pink dressing gown with lace on it, over her pyjamas, and looked very charming.

"Look here, Your Majesty," she said, "When Aunt Beatrice is here we have to play tennis all the time, and we don't want to".

"In truth," said Basil, balancing himself on the bedpost, "we, your liege subjects flatly refuse to waste our time and yours too in such an unintellectual pastime".

He put his hands on the bed-rail and threw his legs high into the air, coming down lightly on the carpet.

"Now, you have a good deal of influence with Aunt Beatrice," said Leonora, applying herself more seriously to the deputation.

"Sweet lady," said Mr. Laurel, smoothing down the collar of his sleeping jacket, "it shall be as you wish. We consider that the game is too frivolous for a royal pursuit and will play it only when the lady Beatrice, over whom we have no authority, absolutely insists".

"Good," said Basil. "Come, Leonore, try to exit backwards.

"Good-night, Your Majesty."

But Leonora did not for the moment move from the bed.

"Is that your dressing gown?" she asked. "Isn't it lovely? May I try it on?"

"A present from the Emperor of China," Mr. Laurel remarked. "You may."

She walked up and down the room in the brightly coloured thing.

"It is curious how few colours suit you," said he.

She looked at him reproachfully, and put the dressing gown on the bed.

Basil put the light out and went out.

"But when colours do suit you, they do," said Mr. Laurel laughing and taking hold of the end of her dressing gown. It slipped a little off her shoulder and she nearly left it behind with him, like the princess in the fairy tale, and she went out.

"Isn't he decent?" he heard her whisper to Basil outside the door.

Just as he was falling asleep it occurred to him that it was not a fairy tale at all, but Potiphar's wife. What an amazing thing!

The next morning he went into the garden before breakfast. They had breakfast very late there. The grass was still wet with dew and the top of the tennis net was wet, too. He drew his hand along it as he passed. Then he sat down in the sunshine.

Leonora and Basil came running down on to the lawn. She wore a navy blue jersey and knickers, while Basil looked very tall and rather diabolical in a black jersey and tights.

"We do our exercises now," he shouted in explanation.

They proceeded to do the more gymnastic dance steps. Basil seemed to be able to spring perpendicularly into the air with a very little expenditure of energy. Leonora was agile but there was nothing conscious about her movements. Basil turned a somersault on to his feet and said, "She helps me a lot, you know. I have to practise lifting her".

And he lifted her in various ways and into various positions and, finally, carrying her high above his head, he ran the whole length of the court with her.

"Bravo," said Mr. Laurel with genuine admiration.

"Do you really think it is good?" said Basil coming back, "and it would be much easier with a proper dancer, you know".

"Yes," said Mr. Laurel, "have you any definite plans?"

"Well, not exactly," said Basil. "I have lessons every vac., you know, and now I can have them all the time. I shall have some money when I am of age, and Aunt Margaret is lending me some until then."

"Perhaps I can help you in some way," said Mr. Laurel. "I know one or two dancers; would it be any use your meeting them?"

"Oh, yes, please," he said, and grasped Mr. Laurel's hands. "Of course, there is a lot I can't do, you know," he added. "There are many things I can't practise with Leonore. Look, put your hand there."

He placed Mr. Laurel's hand on his spine and bent back very far indeed.

"Good," said he.

"Now do it to Leonore," said Basil.

He obediently put his hand on Leonora's spine and she bent back rather stiffly. If one could judge by touching it, her spine must have been very pretty. It is a funny thing, but there really is something very attractive about the thought of skeletons of red-haired people. They are the only kind of skeletons one would not mind meeting at night. How deliciously intimate it would have been to have a conversation with Leonora's skeleton.

"You see, she does not press on you at all, as she should," said Basil, and Mr. Laurel recalled the object of the experiment.

There was only one fault that could be found with the tennis court there, and that is that there was a glasshouse full of yellow roses just a little too near. When Mr. Laurel does return a ball he usually endeavours to return it to heaven, whence at the beginning all things came, and on one of these occasions, after a short sojourn in the upper air, it fell through the roof of this glasshouse.

Leonora ran from her side to fetch it, and he, entering at the other end, contemplated for a moment the lovely picture she made among the yellow roses.

"How nice you look," he said, forgetting to look for the ball.

She smiled. "Like what?" she asked.

I do not know why it is impossible to expound an æsthetic appreciation to a schoolgirl.

"Like the apricot and the pineapple in a fruit salad," he said.

She turned away, but as they both saw the ball and reached for it, he pressed her hand, and the child blushed most furiously and ran out.

The curious thing is that he does not remember noticing Beatrice much during all this time. At least, they walked along together the day they went for a picnic, but she talked about the things they always talk about when they meet in town, and she rather got on his nerves, so completely had he given himself up to the atmosphere of the country and the garden and the roses and Leonora with them. They were going to picnic on a little hill near, where some young birch trees grew near the top, rather like a regiment of young amazons, novices, who, after their first battle, had been forced to retreat up the hill, but had retreated in perfect order. A much older, larger tree among them added to this effect, but no, indeed, it made them look also rather like a party of schoolgirls with a mistress on guard, and they presented a most terrifying phalanx of virginity. Mr. Laurel laughed.

They all sat in the shadow of the first of the little birch trees and had tea, and afterwards he lay looking up at the sky and at the feathery little branches above his head, and listened to the sound of Leonora's voice making Basil arrange the things as she wanted them in the basket. Afterwards she came and sat by him, and began to fan him with a fern.

"The gnats are coming," she said.

Basil looked towards them, but seeing her occupied called Beatrice.

"I say, Aunt Beatrice, if you could only hold this branch a moment," and he went out of Mr. Laurel's field of vision into the big tree. But Beatrice on her way there cast at Mr. Laurel a little smile of malice and veiled amusement for which he saw no occasion then.

Leonora looked down at him and smiled, saying something or other, and he shut his eyes, and imagined himself making love to one of those birch-maidens, and slipping an arm around her slender silver waist. But as soon as he tried to imagine her virtuous reaction to such behaviour, she turned back into a tree with her little leaves, and her branches swaying, inaccessible above his head. He opened his eyes and looked at Leonora. She was looking at him and she blushed a little. He wondered what she would have done if he had slipped an arm around *her* waist instead, but not for worlds would he have had anything happen to dispel the delightful langour of that afternoon under the pale blue sky, so he contented himself with holding a corner of her green dress as he might have plucked a leaf of the birch tree.

They went home, not straight down the hill, but along the side of it by a path winding between the trees. And he was no less charmed with Leonora and the birch trees than with Basil walking between the trees balancing the basket on his head, as dark and graceful as a young slave.

By the time they reached the road, it was growing dusk. Basil and Beatrice walked on in front, and Leonora and Mr. Laurel slowly followed them. Leonora talked.

"I am so glad you have stopped teasing me," she said, and she told him all about school, and her dearest friend Judith with whom she had only lately had a terrible quarrel, and about the mistress whom they both adored, Judith, it appeared, with a fierce and flaming passion, Leonora, so he was led to believe, with a calmer but more eternal devotion. And he learnt also how serious a step she felt leaving school was, and then he felt what a large gulf there was between them, but not so wide that he could not help her to balance across it, perhaps on a thin plank that shook and dipped down in the middle, not, you know, that he was nearly forty and she seventeen, but merely that he had left school a term before her.

It was nearly dark when they arrived home, and, on the way into the garden, Basil began to sing, beating time with a dusty branch in his hand, and Leonora joined in. Mr. Laurel did not know the song, but he joined in too, singing anything to the tune. And again he caught Beatrice looking at him with a malicious little smile, which he resented without quite knowing why. It was a well-known fact that he did not always sing in tune, but he was not sensitive about that.

After this it poured with rain for three days without stopping. There was no tennis. Mr. Laurel sat about indoors and read, and he spent one morning playing dances for Basil. One evening Leonora sang Elizabethan songs in a rather sharp high voice. She stood in the middle of the carpet and sang without an atom of self-consciousness.

"You are more fresh and fair than I
Yet stubs do live when flowers do die,"

said her voice, and the piano played a little dance-measure to it. Really, it was all very charming.

The next morning the rain was over and the sun was shining through its tears. Mr. Laurel went out into the garden. The grass was sodden with rain; three days' rain had fallen on it.

The little posts on the tennis court were wet and each rose in the garden was full of rain. There is something quite strange about a garden after the rain. A field wakes up fresh and strong like a peasant. Three days' rain are nothing to it. But a garden lies exhausted, like a young girl who has tasted too much the pleasures of love. There is no describing the voluptuous feeling a garden gives one.

Mr. Laurel went and sat in a little summer house and looked up at the house over the sloping lawns. And there he began carving a rose on the wooden table with such engrossment that he did not see Basil and Leonora come down to the garden, and they did not see him, but stood near a little rose tree. Leonora smelt a flower and Basil handed her a handkerchief to wipe the raindrops off her nose.

He looked down at the flowers and suddenly round at Leonora.

Then he looked up towards the house, but it never occurred to him to look in Mr. Laurel's direction.

"Leonore, come over here a minute," he said, pointing to the glasshouse. She looked up at him, but obediently followed. Against the side of the glasshouse some freshly cut squares of turf were piled up. He pointed to them, and she sat down, looking up at him, and probably expecting some new trick. Now he was out of sight of the house. He bent down, put his arms around her shoulders and kissed her, on the cheek though, not on her mouth.

Mr. Laurel could see from where he was how she blushed. Basil laughed, and felt, I dare say, awfully wicked and daring. But he was a little embarrassed too. For lack of anything to say, he kissed her again, and she hid her face against his mackintosh. They sat down side by side and could not even look at each other. Then Basil said something, with a casual air, nonchalantly turned a cartwheel somersault on the wet grass, and they walked out through the gate, looking straight ahead of them, and with the mark of the brown turfs across the backs of their mackintoshes.

And as they passed out of the gate it seemed to Mr. Laurel that his youth vanished with them. He watched them walk along the road until they disappeared and he was left behind with the rain-sodden garden. He felt an overwhelming melancholy within his soul, and yet it seemed, too, as if he were on the threshold of a thought that would console him, when, looking up, he saw Beatrice sitting reading just outside the house. She was in white again, ready to play when the grass was dry. He suddenly began to see why she had smiled with such malice. It was at the spectacle of him fatuously running after a schoolgirl, anxiously watching each little blush, as though blushes were not simply a physical characteristic of schoolgirls. He nearly blushed himself at the thought. It would have been far more appropriate if he had carried on a flirtation with Beatrice, who was nearer his own age. He suddenly felt even more alarmed. He recalled the number of times he had played tennis with Beatrice and taken her out, without ever having considered that she was of a marriageable age. But now that he had discovered that he was himself middle-aged, he began to see that he had behaved in a most compromising manner. He almost ran across the lawn intending in a few moments' conversation to efface his unconscious behaviour of years. But he stumbled up the steps, and when he got to her, he felt a little embarrassed, perhaps not unnaturally.

Beatrice looked slowly up from her book as though she believed he had come especially to tell her something. This put what he had meant to say out of his head, and, after a moment's embarrassing silence, he hurriedly looked down the garden and said,

"It will soon be dry enough for tennis."

"Yes," said Beatrice and after a moment looked down again at her book. And as he went in he saw her smiling to herself, so that he felt awfully foolish.

She took absolutely no notice of him for the next few days, except on one morning, when Basil and Leonora were out together, she made him play tennis with her. He felt unusually tired and weary. When Beatrice played with him she always played without exerting herself, so that he did at least touch the ball now and then, but this time she exerted herself to play. Balls seemed to be hurled at him from every direction, and every one of them seemed to be expressing contempt. She served balls that sped low along the ground, and he felt that he had forfeited her respect for ever. If only he had had the strength to return one of them! But the racquet hung heavily in his hand and he felt profoundly depressed.

Only the day before they were to go, he thought of the long drive home with her, and he felt that it would be an ordeal too terrifying to be borne. He walked downstairs thinking of it with dread. "A letter for Your Imperial Highness", said Leonora, waving it to him and laughing.

Mr. Laurel opened it, and, though there was nothing important in it at all, said with an expression of great consternation,

"I must go home to-day."

"But we were going to give you a farewell feast to-night," said Leonora. "Oh, please, don't go."

"I am so sorry," he said, "but it is very important."

There was no mistaking her disappointment. And she and Basil paid him the utmost attention until after lunch, but he was not to be deceived a second time. And then they took him to the station and sat on the wooden fence and waved him affectionate and admiring good-byes.

Now he has decided to go abroad for the winter because he finds that his diary is full of engagements with Beatrice, and he is only waiting to keep some quite inevitable ones and to take Basil to lunch with the dancers, and then he will escape.

DOROTHY EDWARDS

A NOTE ON FICTION

HAVING briefly considered* the notions commonly attached in the criticism of fiction to the vague term character, it may be profitable to examine the almost antithetical set of ideas it is customary to include under the equally wide term "narrative" or its synonyms. The word has one quite technical sense, when it is used of the method of a book. Then it signifies that a course of events is related directly by the author or his mouthpiece, and contrasts with "dramatic" or "scenic", which indicate that events are rendered more immediately by dialogue or other representational devices. In this sense, however, which is descriptive rather than critical, the word is quite unambiguous.

The case is different when it is applied to the whole book to denote the action, as distinguished from the characters. It has an apparently greater critical relevance than the latter term on account of the more genuine objectivity of the quality it designates. But this advantage is only apparent, for the actual story of a novel eludes the epitomist as completely as character; few great works are not ridiculous in synopsis. And for this reason—that the form of a novel only exists as a balance of response on the part of the reader. Hence schematic plot is a construction of the reader's that corresponds to an aspect of that response and stands in merely diagrammatic relation to the source. Only as precipitates from the memory are plot or character tangible; yet only in solution have either any emotive valency. The composition of this metaphorical fluid is a technical matter. The technique of the novel is just as symphonic as the technique of the drama and as dependent, up to a point, on the dynamic devices of articulation and control of narrative tempo. But, though dependent, it is dependent as legs are on muscles, for the *how* but not the *why* of movement; and, interesting as functional technique may be to the mechanical minded and to workers in the same medium on the look-out for tips, the organic is the province of criticism. More important, then, than what may be called the tricks of narrative is the status of plot and its relation to the other elements of a novel, particularly its relation to character, in solution.

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* *In a review in "The Calendar" for July.*

Modern opinion, commonly assuming that the novelist expresses himself primarily through character, tends to regard story as more or less incidental; either it is scorned as part of the "good old compromise . . . for the entertainment of the reader" or it is looked on as merely the expository structure—the Aintree, as it were, of character or, in less serious connexion, a modiste's parlour elegantly set for the mannequin parade.

Hence, though it is stipulated that plot be organic, it is required to be so in the sense that it may be said to arise out of, or be determined by, character. When a book is found satisfactory, this fundamental condition is said to be fulfilled, and "value" is attributed to it or quarried out of character. Only when an imaginative failure is perceived is the plot scrutinized and then only for the, as it were, temporal location of the lapse, whose occasion is still sought elsewhere.

This position is vulnerable from several points. In the first place, in any sense in which the terms used have a meaning at all, it is plain that character, that is, that idea of a human being that is carried away from a play or a novel, is a product of the narrative. Whereas it is impossible to attend to the barest recital of an event, or series of events, without calling up for oneself an idea of the persons concerned, an equally bare description of character invokes no such animated notion. In fact, it is impossible to acquire from words any idea of a person unless that person is defined in time as well as in space. That is to say, action of some sort is indispensable. But, though this be admitted, it may still be maintained that value, nevertheless, resides in the character thus created.

This is, in fact, the usual contention. Professor S. Gaselee, in an Essay on the Greek Novel in the *Daphnis and Chloë* volume of the Loeb Classics, remarks that "fiction is one of the very few of the inventions of man that have improved in the course of the ages". "Brought up," he declares, "on good novels, we are bored with their rude predecessors of antiquity. . . Of psychology there is barely a trace . . . any attempt indeed at character-drawing is faint and rough".

I am not concerned to defend Longus and his fellows against their detractor. Certainly, they and their English imitators such as Barnaby Riche and Robert Greene very soon become tiresome. No more speedily, however, than Maurice Hewlett, whose *Forest Lovers* is instanced in the same essay as an example of the good novels that formed the Professor's taste. But the reasons given for the condemnation are interesting. In part, of course, they are the indignant outcry of a sophisticated palate at being fobbed off with thin and pastoral fare. More than that, though, they are also the sincere lament of an unsatisfied appetite. The Professor would like some sauce, but he really needs meat.

If we offered him Homer, even Homer in an English prose version, we should hear, instead of these wails of hunger, the happy noises of prolonged mastication. Now, it cannot be contended that the addition of a little psychology and character-drawing to a chain of events makes all the difference between æsthetic starvation and satisfaction, but some quality inherent in those events. And it is this quality that is common to all great works of literature, in no matter what genre. It is a unity among the events, a progressive rhythm that includes and reconciles each separate rhythm. As manifested in the novel, it resolves, when analyzed, chiefly into character and plot in a secondary, schematic sense,—qualities that are purely fictitious. Neither is an active element in the whole work in the way that melody and harmony are elements in a piece of music. Perhaps it would be less ambiguous to designate this basic, poetic quality by some such term as rhythm or development; on the other hand, plot or story do indicate its nature—that it is primarily a sequence of events developing in accordance with an inner necessity.

And it is the recognition of this inner necessity that constitutes the recognition of value. To call this organizing principle "character" is to attribute essential importance to what may be no more than a secondary manifestation and is often, even on the face of it, inaccurate. Obviously, the *Odyssey* has this unity; but it does not proceed from Ulysses. So, too, has *War and Peace;* yet Tolstoy makes it, perhaps, even too plain that events develop quite independently of the people they affect, as well as of those who are trying to affect them. And Hardy, in this at least, resembles him. Ultimately, this rhythmic coherence springs from the writer's conception of life and the adequacy thereto of his vehicle.

Actually, then, character is, to borrow biological jargon, an emergent quality of the novel. It emerges from the story, which is itself structurally a product of language, eloquence. An attempt, however, to cut out this intervening stage is marked by the assumption that the novelist's primary creation is of character. And this also indicates what is peculiar in the scope of modern fiction.

By the classic writer, elaborating a given pattern, the individual is seen included within the metaphysical hierarchy, symbolized as Fate, gods, and mortals. To the romantic, however, the individual appears containing within him that hierarchy, so that the writer is compelled to invent his own pattern. And the remoter his experience from the common, and the more personal his values, the more difficult will it be for his creation to make contact with an audience. This task, however, may be left to the character who, however highly specialized, is to be assumed to be a human being with the emotional, etc., equipment common to such. Whether a sceptical audience that, unmoved by assertion, demands sensible proof will be convinced is another matter.

Historically, character, as we now understand it, is an outcome of the Romantic Revival, a movement that has been discerned by some as one of escape from the mechanistic and indifferent universe of science into the fastness of the individual soul and of an attempt to locate there the limitations that constitute value. In Professor Whitehead's words: "The independence ascribed to bodily substances carried them away from the realm of values altogether. They degenerated into a mechanism entirely valueless except as suggestive of external ingenuity". (There is no reason, however, to suppose, as this phrasing implies, and as it so often suggested, that developments in the æsthetic sphere proceed as effects from developments in other departments of thought. The imaginative faculty being supreme, poets themselves, not science nor philosophy, are to blame for any decay of sensibility).

Such an abstraction of values from the objective universe involves a corresponding restriction of the scope of significant action. In the epic, it is the completed action that animates the bare recital of events and, by unifying them, gives it structural vitality. Since the end is ordained by Fate operating through the wills and passions of gods and mortals, their deeds and speech are adequate to the poet's purpose. There is no need to go behind them to explain their meaning; that meaning is what happened and its inevitability. (The epic poet, like the historian, has also the advantage that, since the events he deals with actually occurred, his narrative cannot be doubted on the score of historic truth, but has only to satisfy as to its imaginative truth, or arrangement, whereas the feigning novelist raises questions of probability. But he, too, pretends to the authority of the past tense, and no one is likely so far to forget the rules of the game as to object unless there is a defect in his arrangement also).

Problems arise, however, when the overt subject of a narrative is, not the fore-doomed destruction of Troy, but the integration of a Richard Myrtle. The scene of action being removed from the external to the psychological world, a technique is required that will manifest the otherwise imperceptible events. Further, a principle is needed that will unify those events when manifested. This principle can be identified with the individual, the "character", and located, by the romantics proper in the emotions, by Henry James in the intelligence, by the followers of Freud—gentle Ruths, gleaning psychology's alienist fields—in the sub-conscious.

Linked to these questions is that of authority—the angle from which the story shall be presented. Henry James was the first to realize consciously and to state that the interior drama must be shown to the inner eye if it is to be emotively efficient. But it is not vision alone that confers authority; Homer owes his to no sleight-of-hand with the "seeing-eye", but to the internal consistency of that which he offers to it. Nevertheless, visualization is necessary, and it is the problem of objectifying and setting in disciplined motion the subjective narrative that has occupied nearly all English novelists of importance since Fielding, and Richardson before him.

It is curious that, though the Romantics destroyed the poetic forms of the previous tradition, yet the novel continued for a considerable period to be written on Fielding's plan. This was, perhaps, largely due to the fact that in England the novel has rarely been the medium of first-rate creative minds and to the not unrelated lack of self-consciousness in the matter of technique on the part of its practitioners. And Fielding's extraordinary effectiveness encouraged such inertia. But the effectiveness of his method proceeded from its entire adequacy to its content, which did not include the individual sensibility. Fielding's attitude was primarily social; he saw people as units in society and estimated their actions by the resultant effects on that organism. Secure of an audience that shared his views, he was able to use objective narrative with authority, though only types emerged from it. Further, being conservative of a tradition that accepted the whole of life as material for art, he was able to base his story very firmly on experience. But for all its permanence and solidity, his art was not heroic, as he himself admitted in calling *Tom Jones* a comic epic. Fielding's single-mindedness, that enabled him to retain so firm a grasp on the more immediate aspects of existence, was dependent on a spiritual crassness that allowed him to remain content with the stuffy metaphysics of his day. The difference between tragic and comic art lies partly in the different attitudes adopted towards the catastrophes ensuing on a collision between individual and collective values. Of course, the great comic artist, such as Congreve, takes his stand above society; his standards are absolute and his own, not those of the herd.

Now, it is the weakness of an art such as Fielding's that it is almost wholly typical. It operates by the setting in opposition qualities abstracted from men, so that the response it arouses is only partial. It has the veracity of correct analysis and the further truth of coherent re-combination, but the appeal is limited mainly to admiration. If the romantic attention to the individual had meant an extension of the field of perception, the attempt to particularize and subtilize Fielding's structure might have succeeded. Unfortunately, it meant not an extension, but merely a shifting of that field. Consequently, though along with Fielding's method, some of his immediacy was retained, it became increasingly more necessary to expound the meaning of action. Thus the plots of the Victorians became cumbered with a vast amount of not strictly relevant matter, essential to them for their "meaning", but quite un-resolvable. For the difficulty in exteriorizing the movements of the individual sensibility is twofold. Outward actions have to be invented that will re-create, and not merely illustrate, inward happenings, and these highly particularized actions have at the same time to be universalized. The necessity for having regard to these two aspects constitutes the real problem. Dostoievsky solved it by the violent conjunction of extreme realism in manner to extreme ideality of attitude, but he did so only at the expense of a tremendous amount of will that might advantageously have been liberated for other purposes.

Henry James is often given credit for having been the first to assert that events within the mind might be just as important as those without. The claim is hardly just, but he certainly was the first to realize that the interior drama might be rendered immediately by language without the intervention of circumstantiating physical action at every stage, that the word was as capable of embodying mental as physical movements, and that its latter function was useful only because of its superior vividness.

But James', like Fielding's, was primarily a social art. Truly, the society James contemplated was composed of members far more differentiated and sensitive to other's individuality than any Fielding could conceive, and it was his own creation. It is one, however, in which the maximum development is assured for certain impulses only at the cost of the almost complete omission of others—roughly, the grosser appetites Fielding handled so vigorously.

Thus, though James' narrative is autonomous, it is so only within the boundaries of a limited experience; his action is complete and self-sufficing because it springs from a single source, but it is ultimately invalidated by a latent dualism that is not explicit only because the intractable factor is altogether suppressed. (This suppression is not complete until his last period, but its progress can be observed in his earlier books). Hence the much extolled purity of his plots is actually of less worth than the impurity of those of the "great" Victorians, in which the presence of large masses of unassimilated matter is evidence of at least an attempt to be comprehensive.

But James' skill in the manipulation of incident, the intricate technique by which events were arranged in varying degrees of relief so that the climax stood out in the round with the maximum intensity and immediacy, was one elaborated to dispose the most attenuated substance in the most substantial manner possible and was dependent on the prose that, apparently aimless, yet with certainty isolated and held up to view the fact on which James wished to dwell. Without it none of James' other devices is sufficient to give more than mechanical form to a novel, as appears from his imitators.

It is notable that Joyce uses no such devices. Nothing in *Ulysses* is, to use Mr. Lubbock's distinction, reported; everything is shown or dramatized. But Joyce contemplates not only the discrepancy between actuality and individual values, between things as they are and as they appear modified by the sensibility; his irony springs from a more profound opposition—that within the subject, the contrast between actual impulse and the appearance that, too, assumes in consciousness. From this profoundly critical standpoint, he is able to exteriorize and objectify vast psychological tracts that as a rule lurk shapelessly outside the action of a novel, perceptible only as unaccountable influences that distort and hinder its progress. And regarding with an equal eye the response both to external and internal stresses, attributing no more value to the one than to the other, he is able to compel both into the same perspective and so set in motion events that, occurring simultaneously on both planes, are in themselves adequate and self-sufficient. Thus the authority and directness of objective presentation is secured for the subjective narrative, Joyce's unit being the consciousness, not its social crystallization, the character. Dedalus and Bloom are but symbols of disintegration; the imminent, never clearly apprehended Ulysses is the hero of this Odyssey, whose significance lies wholly in the completed action and its organic relation to the events of which it is composed.

C. H. Rickword.

THE DELUGE

"Peut-être l'avenir appartient-il
aux hommes déclassés?"
Baudelaire.

Poet to Punk :
Now that the light's grim daily duty's done
silence and shadow mitigate despair;
only the split-man frets to sit alone
convoking visions to a squalid lair.

Now London lies a garden to our eyes,
where the tall heliotrope still coldly blaze.
The poets scan the Roget of the skies
but a bilked ponce chokes up the finer phrase.

Among these streets my vagrant fancy roams
for scraps of sympathy, love's well-scraped bones,
but the beds creaking in a million homes
with nature's vast excuses proffer stones.

My body leans, that beggar emaciate,
starved of all solace, at the open sash.
Night-long I burn in candour's hollow grate
till housemaid morning sifts my wasted ash.

I have a wealth of words to thrill your ear,
(my soul drips honey though my pen seem tart).
If I had your number, my postulated dear,
this is the conversation I would start.

"I am the Noah of the final flood
and preach precaution to an ironic Park.
To you, related by closer ties than blood,
I offer the sole ticket for my ark.

"When the last spires tilt to the rising waves
and what was city seems a foundered fleet,
we shall lean out and peer in sumptuous caves
once interdict to our laborious feet;

"whilst in mid-depth a medalled dolphin rolls,
the unctuous, brutal warden of those rich gates,
whose rot-racked eyes focus the tattered drolls,
dis-ranked, but rankly female, that sprawl the slates;

"whilst putrefaction dyes the taunting flesh
whose the world was, though not, it seems, for keeps— :
cover the chasm with mourning's ashen mesh
before my incorrigible Adam weeps.

"Then out oars, and avoid the miasmal bed
to which our low first parents still aspire;
Adam in me, in you Eve grieves to tread
a world not moulded to the heart's desire.

"We'll spend Eternity in an open boat,
like a fresh sort of Sunday up the Thames;
purged of friend Garvin's sickly antidote
to a proposal his stout world contemns.

"I have no fortune to lay out on stores;
no animal but you joins me for love
and keep. How query the presumptive shores
unless hope hatches faith's poor innocent dove?

"No wing may pierce that calm, last, vast, daft scene,
no beak pillage unimaginable banks;
now gods abandon this effete machine
the future functions through our rejected flanks.

"Meet me To-Morrow then, that edge of Time,
the jetty in the ungovernable waste
where you and I, gaunt rats, cautious in crime,
embark our longings and transpose distaste."

EDGELL RICKWORD.

SOME ASPECTS OF YAHOO RELIGION

IT is not to be supposed from what I said in my previous article that the yahoos have succeeded in destroying entirely the influences of their one-time oppressors; but one would fail to do justice to the progressive qualities of their inherently common-sense culture if one did not attempt to illustrate the consummate skill with which they have adapted the ridiculous institutions, not only of the houyhnhnms, but also of the other nations with whom they came into contact. To deny that, since the establishment of the yahoos in power, there have been periodic reversions on the part of small sects to the stupidities of their tyrants would be to attest superhuman qualities of those who, after all, are only human; but, nevertheless, one stands amazed at the consistency with which they have advanced along the road pointed out by their first leaders. The nature of the cultural split to which, one may say without exaggeration, Scatophilos owes its present position, was summed up in the early days of the revolt by one of their leading thinkers when he declared, "Man does not live on spirit alone". Nor was this aphorism left unsupported by measures of a more practical nature.

It was early realized that "the races and other bodily exercises" which had been practised amongst the houyhnhnms (these are mentioned by Gulliver but not described) might be, in the hands of sensible organizers, a valuable means of counteracting the absurd ascendancy of spiritual values in social life. I do not intend to trace their growth from somewhat crude beginnings to the ultimate, all-embracing conception of Sport: for the purpose of this preliminary study, it will be sufficient to consider a few of the general characteristics of this humane cult. Originally, the worship of Sport (this is a feeble translation of the content of the yahoo word) was confined to a few of the more powerful families, in whose hands lay the power to remould or modify the accompanying ritual and doctrine. With the rapid spread of absolute knowledge and enlightenment which has taken place in the last sixty years, however, the cult has, as was to be expected, assumed enormous proportions. Based as it is on recognition of the body, it makes a more direct appeal to humanity than religions which, in defiance of scientific progress, cling to the old superstitions of an individual soul and the implied mumbo-jumbo. There are, naturally, some divergences, both as to beliefs and practices, amongst its adherents, but the fundamental conception of the Great Sport, the type or *forma* of perfection, allows of no quibbling.

It is, perhaps, difficult for anyone who has not visited the country to imagine the respect and deep love which accompanies the worship of this divinity. But no one who has been present, as I have, at one of their more important meetings could fail to be impressed by the solemnity of the procedure. The players (officiating priests), attired in the full regalia of their caste, are greeted on their appearance with cries of admiration which are hushed to an attentive silence as the throngs of worshippers follow, with a love born of knowledge, the minutest details of an intricate ritual. Occasionally, the stillness is broken by the ecstatic cry of a devotee, encouraging the priests in the fulfillment of their arduous office, but it is when the service draws to a close and the vast concourse of people is dispersing that one realizes the full depth of their feeling. On every side one hears enthusiastic and informed discussion, and in all faces is reflected the cheerfulness which accompanies their devotion. One feels that here, indeed, is a religion which is in touch with humanity, which can prepare its followers for the ordeal of daily life. But a scientific observer must not allow himself to be carried away by panegyric, and, after this brief digression, I return to the consideration of more practical details. It must be understood that the worship of the Great Sport is not confined to these solemn occasions. Its liturgies have been so arranged that they may be followed by any number of people in town or country, indoors or among the glories of nature, by child and adult alike. It is by no means uncommon, indeed, to find an invalid or elderly person pursuing his devotions in solitude. So universal is the belief in their national deity that I have seen elderly female yahoos, with the aid only of a pack of cards, worshipping with incredible ardour. I should add, however, that this form of worship is not admitted by the majority of yahoos to be so efficacious; first, because it does not include physical development, and, secondly, because the temptation to cheat (or, as we might say, blaspheme) is unusually strong. Strictly speaking, the latter objection is not valid, and the profounder dogmatists argue that, when physical exertion is impossible, such practices are permissible since they are capable of embodying and teaching the chief principles of Sport. These may be summed up as: (1) To train one's faculties to perform some feat of absolutely no value; (2) To preserve under all circumstances, especially adverse, a true and sporting equanimity; (3) To develop, wherever possible, the body, or principle of cheerfulness, and to subdue the mind, or principle of depression. I confess that I was, at first, somewhat surprised by the first of these principles, which seemed to me to be of a mystical nature at variance with the sanity of this great people, but, in a discussion with one of their most learned Players, a Pro, (this title corresponds roughly to our Doctor of Divinity), I was convinced of its practical bearing. As he justly pointed out, what could so well fit a man to play his part in a great democracy as learning to do efficiently the eminently useless? The cogency of this straightforward reasoning dumbfounded me, but, after a longer stay in Scatophilos, I grew accustomed to discarding the involved habits of thoughts which exercise such a retrograde influence over our own civilization. Stupid, indeed, would he be who, having once learned to judge by the criterion of Sportingness, should revert to the effete distinctions of Good and Bad.

If there is one field where the teaching of Sportingness is to be more admired than another, it is that of morality. In their eyes, the cardinal virtue is Decency, and it will be my endeavour to show the ethical wisdom which underlies this concept. In passing, I may say that the yahoos are exceptionally fortunate in their leading men, for one would search many other countries in vain to find such sterling examples of decent Sportsmen as are set by their Prime Minister and ruling family. To anyone at all acquainted with the esoteric doctrine of Sportingness, it will be obvious that a very distinct line is drawn between public and private behaviour, and it is this acuity—I had almost said inspired acuity—of ethical perception which assures the high moral tone of Scatophilos. It is obvious that for a member of a Race Gang, Mining Association, or Reviewing Staff, *qua* public man, (e.g., giving evidence), to speak the truth would be a breach of the elementary rules of Decency, but, were the same man, *qua* private individual, to lie to a friend or relation, he would equally offend.

By any absolute or other trumpery ethical standard a man who lied in either capacity would be adjudged untrustworthy, but the higher criterion of the yahoos, by authoritatively uniting the irreconcilable, achieves a moral syncretism which has already gone far to obliterating sin. And the effects of this reasonable relativity are seen to be far-reaching, for the principle of Decency is capable of bringing out the best in every one. I myself have met yahoos who, though mentally deficient, were among their most honoured poets, politicians who were kind to their families, and notorious poufs willingly supported by their wives.

In the narrower sphere of sexual morality, the teaching of the Sporting religion is on the whole equally salutary, but Scatophilos has not altogether escaped the general laxity of this age, and there have recently come into being one or two sects whose activities are causing grave disquietude amongst the authorities. As two of these are of the first importance to the social historian, I will describe briefly the nature of their heresies, beginning with the Contraceptualists, since their views have been embraced by many of the graver yahoos, and thus present the more serious problem. Doctrinally, they take their stand on the first of Sporting principles, i.e., the importance of performing to the best of one's ability an utterly useless feat. The initiation ceremony is simple and may be performed by any male and female, though it is pretty generally agreed that it is preferable they should be "in love". As, however, it is usually carried out without witnesses and as their devotional literature is barred by the censor, I was unable to discover the exact nature of their rites, though from what I gathered they bear some resemblance to those practised by the Javan natives and Borneo head hunters.

From such conversations as I heard amongst the informed, I concluded that their doctrine was not easily refutable and that their position was further strengthened by their affinity with such sects as the Philanderers and Men of the World, whose orthodoxy is unquestionable. There is one very strong argument against them, however, which holds that the rules of Sportingness are universally valid and that even a germ has its rights, but, as the question has not yet been settled, I will pass on to the second sect—the self-styled Euphebians. I say self-styled advisedly, for this title is but rarely heard, its place being supplied in common speech by a series of epithets usually of a bantering or vindictive nature. This schism is based on the same interpretation of doctrine as the foregoing, but so extreme are their views that they are wont to show the utmost scorn for the Contraceptualists whose orthodoxy, they maintain, depends on the effectiveness of a mere mechanical contrivance, whereas their own devotions could not conceivably lead to any end whatsoever. It is not unusual to meet with members of this cult in every strata of society; nor is this surprising, for, if one can believe their own statisticians, their number has always been a high one. Indeed, there is scarcely a great man of any epoch, either yahoo or foreigner, whom they have not conclusively proved to have been a Euphebian, and in this branch of learning they are bewilderingly erudite. For the most part they are easily recognizable. Their voices, rather high-pitched, have an uncommon sweetness of tone; their clothing is noticeable for its extreme, almost feminine, distinction, and they comport themselves with an unbelievable grace and tenderness. To have seen a number of them together is to appreciate the justness of their colloquial appellation, Fairies, though I should add that these characteristics are typical only of the fully initiated; nor do they describe exactly the more elderly Euphebian, whose charm is at once maturer and less conspicuous. They are frequently to be seen in certain cafés, turkish baths, and, more publicly, at those theatres whose programme is of a definitely æsthetic nature. Their ritualistic meetings, however, take place in secrecy, and it is then customary for one of their number to assume the dress and manners of a female in which they show a very interesting connexion with our own Morris and Folk dancers. The full liturgy involves a more esoteric ritual, but I could not ascertain that this was often performed.

When I say that this amiable sect is treated not only by the priests, but also by the average Sportsman, with contumely and malice, the unbiased reader will, doubtless, express some surprise. And I must myself confess to some doubts of the wisdom shown by the yahoo rulers in persecuting a section of the people which displays so many of the national characteristics on which they justly pride themselves. It is true that they do not practise a direct communion with the Great Sport, but, at the same time, there are few more ardent patrons of the ring and running track. Not only is their teaching widely spread throughout the army, navy, and other professions, but, were the fine arts to be deprived of their valuable support, it is doubtful if those valuable, though anachronistic institutions, would survive. Opinion generally allows that they are responsible for much of the high-brow and all of the pseudo-æsthetic-mystical literature, and it would be unwise of the Government to check in any way a cultural stream of such manifest political importance. Indeed, their mildly laxative verse and their extreme sensibility due to their carefully-matured dilettantism are as effective means of propagating the true yahoo spirit as many more popularly recognized as such.

In *The Idea of an Earthly Paradise,* I shall have much more to say on this and kindred subjects, but I cannot leave the engrossing question of yahoo religion without some mention of a cult known as the Literary Game. From many points of view, this denomination is the fine flower of the orthodox Sporting religion. It is true that, as its central deity, it worships the Whole rather than the Great Sport, but this distinction is largely a terminological one, and the two conceptions are never mutually exclusive. Though of considerable antiquity, it is only of recent years that the Literary Game has achieved its dominant position. This is to be accounted for partly by the unprecedented growth of intelligence amongst the yahoo population and partly by the impertinent pertinacity with which its earlier dogmatists emphasized, as qualities necessary in the neophyte, an ungregarious intellectual power and innate talent. To-day no such nonsense is heard. As one of the high priests said recently at a dinner given in honour of his seventieth birthday by a body of humane and progressive politicians, "The day of great men is over," and in view of his achievement no one, I think, could dissent. The same note is struck in the appeal for converts so frequently made: "Everyone can write. After two or three hours *you* may be earning up to £15 a week in your spare time." Again I must stress the *practical* value of all yahoo religious teaching: as they claim, "Big money is to be made by the successful writer". Such, not isolated, examples of their precepts are a sure indication to the unbiased observer of the immense cultural advances this people has made. No longer do they posit as moral incentives superstitious systems of spiritual awards, but their whole ethical and aspirational life is founded on a belief in the real, the here and the now, which is appreciable by the whole community.

It is a significant fact that two of their leading weekly papers, which always revealed a strong religious feeling in the number of pages devoted to Sport, have lately added large sections in which to discuss literary questions. And then there is, at least, one magazine, most luxuriantly edited and widely read, in which, with a bold eclecticism, the most progressive writers of the day consider the vital questions of their religion side by side with housewifely hints as to dress and furnishing. It is no small tribute to the open-mindedness, the universality of a nation, that they can enthusiastically support a paper in which appear, with the diverting adjacency of life, a bucolic lyric and a full-page advertisement for sanitary towels. I think one may look forward with confidence to the day when the young yahoo poets will print their verses on toilet rolls and so transform a period of tedium to an act of devotion. This would also effect what is likely to prove a very necessary economy in paper, for now that the antiquated initiation tests have been done away with, the number of poets and writers of imaginative literature is likely greatly to increase. This work of emancipation is largely due to the work performed with a tireless devotion by what one might call the secular orders of the literary hierarchy—that is to say the literary editors and reviewers. A literary editor is usually a yahoo with remarkable social gifts, an easily-excited volubility, and some knowledge of the broader principles of literary production. He is assisted in his task of encouraging literature by a number of reviewers who, with considerable skill, form certain ritualistic anecdotes illustrative of their personal proclivities into ever-new combinations above which are inscribed the names of a book, its author and, more particularly, its publisher. These two orders are largely responsible for the taste of the reading public, in which they usually share; but it is hoped that, before long, there may be no distinction between layman and priest, a distinction which has been empirically proved to be almost meaningless. I should mention as enthusiastic workers towards this ultimate synthesis the young School of Nonsense Poets, but must defer the full consideration of their aims until I can treat at length of the yahoo æsthetic; a question which will, however, be found to have a remote connexion with the Literary Game.

JASPER BILDJE.

NOTES AND REVIEWS

THE NEW POETIC RELATIVITY

There are two classes of people with whom it is very difficult to discuss poetry : the one goes about murmuring that "as things have been they remain", and the other rather frantically proclaims that an absolutely new poetic is about to be established. In the latter kind France and America are most prolific, but now Mr. Graves, having shed his "deep-dyed traditionalism" as he calls it, comes forward preaching release from the old law. Apparently, he wants poetry to be more like life, but, since it is "a cousin of mathematic relativity", it has to live up to its name, and does not claim that its methods are absolutely better, only "more suited to the *moods* of the party that professes them" (my italics). But, if poetry is to have the same reality as life, relativity seems the last thing to go to for inspiration, since the essential character of Einstein's representation of the universe is—a formal symmetry. The products of this new poetic relativity are "protean" in structure; there is to be no "architectural preconception; the growth is organic", but such a distinction is merely emotional. There is no organic growth without architectural preconception; the architecture of an oak or an elm is not the product of environmental circumstances, the idea of their shape is in the seed. Nor can human architecture be condemned as necessarily inorganic; a good shape cannot be conceived without inter-relating the functions of all the parts.

This desire to give poetry "the same reality as life" is, of course, only a rather raw reaction from the contemptible fictions of our conventional versifiers. (Mr. Graves rather unfairly substitutes "traditional" for "conventional"). The emotional content of life is, naturally, as various as the human capacity for feeling, and, as such, any emotion that life provides is suitable subject for poetry. But in natural life all emotions are equally significant, which is the same as saying that they are all insignificant, being merely related baldly to the pain-pleasure assessment. In a poem, however, all the material is there of necessity, of a necessity generated by the poet's conception of that material, so that the resulting structure is perfectly autonomous: its values exist only in and for itself. But, in introducing "unsolved conflict" (which is the essence of "real" life), you prevent the attainment of this autonomy, since the poem is tied by its content to the mind that made it. The poem must go through Time, if at all, with its umbilical cord unsevered, dragging behind it the personality of the author in a paraphernalia of biographies, confessions, and psycho-analytic studies. The English poets, Brunetière said, write "to give themselves the exterior sensation of their *individuality"*, a reproof which would be even more justified than it is already if this theory were allowed to pass—for where there is not conception the identity of subject and object must remain complete; and an ideal conception must produce the most pure poetry since subject and object are then at their farthest remove.

The attractions which Mr. Graves offers the practitioner of the new poetic relativity are numerous. "In grammar it adopts the syntactical convention of the thought-level on which it is staged. This may be regular enough, but, if the mood reaches a point in fantasia where grammar becomes frayed and snaps, then it can dispense with grammar". It is significant of the time that all these attractions are concessions. Those which are not platitudinous are, like the release from grammar, the old poetic licence in a new disguise. They tend to make poetry more "poetic" in the popular sense of abandonment to emotion, an automatic registration of emotional disintegration, which is the bad old idea of poetry particularly dear to the English mind, but not, fortunately, to the majority of our poets. Emancipation being accepted for what it is worth, the job for the critic is to find out which of its suggestions can be assimilated to a formalism which shall be appropriate to the particular idiom of our time.

"The theory," Mr. Graves says, " that the poet should do all the work and spoon-feed his reader is, perhaps, one of the greatest weaknesses of traditional verse". I do not know if there is such a theory, or, if there were, whether it might not be a rather good one, but I have observed that in contemporary practice there is a tendency for the writer to assume that the reader's share of the work begins in the early stages of composition. This is so far from Mr. Graves's own practice that his presence in this gallery is something of a surprise.

* *Another Future of Poetry, by Robert Graves, Hogarth Press, 2/6.*

COMPENSATION

Mr. J. C. Squire in praise of Mr. Robert Lynd:—

"He has a democratic temper which enables him not merely to view the great and the obscure with an equal eye, but leads him naturally to relate the living and the dead: Alexander and

Apollonius, Hindenburg and Mr. Bottomley, they are all one to him. His interests are as catholic as possible, ranging from the most exotic forms of literature to the lowest branches of sport. And he has an obscure desire for compensation that leads him to treat nominally great subjects with a tempered levity, and nominally small ones with a tempered solemnity''.

''Y.Y's'' compensation is naturally not quite so big as his even more catholic-minded critic's, whose rates cannot be much less than those paid by ''the lowest branches of sport''. But this superiority is not stressed and the charming essayist would be the last to cavil at a tribute so—quixotic. But what return can Mr. Lynd make in his next confraternal review of Mr. Squire's next book? What words will he find for one whose ultra-''democratic temper enables him not merely to view the great and the obscure with an equal eye'', but positively to prefer the obscure? The purely Christian literary critic would, perhaps, put up with getting no other compensation for his generous notice than the highest rates of contemporary journalism. But ''Y.Y.'' is not the man to leave the situation as it is, and we await with moral concern *his* compensatory act.

THE IDIOT

In the play now running at the Little Theatre the intricate plan of the novel dwindles into a plot-sequence, and the conversations torn out of the text bob up and down with wayward intensity, like a body out of its element. But the play, false as it is, might have made clear the failure of Myshkin as hero if Mr. Ion Swinley's interpretation of the part had been as acceptable as his execution. The acutely apprehensive figure which he presents is a Myshkin uncrystallized. The moral clairvoyance of the character in the novel is here realized as a suffering social sensibility, no more. But the danger of such a transvaluation away from Dostoievsky's own terms is that it is likely to be incomplete; and this became evident with the progress of the play. In the first act, remembering the novel, one watched Myshkin's personality performing miracles among the Epanchins. In the second act, when he was at the Ivolgins', it became evident that *this* Myshkin could never have affected people so deeply; and, as the rapidity with which he did so was exaggerated by the play's speeding-up of the natural action, one came to dislike him and despise his admirers. The death-scene in the last act was the mere melodrama of actuality. The mysterious bond of attraction between the Prince, Rogojin, and Nastasia was made to seem the usual triangular accident leading on to a newspaper ''tragedy''. But in the novel this movement is the Fate which impels each of the three to try to annex his complement from the others, and ends by breaking up his identity against theirs. Mr.

Swinley's Myshkin is an irresponsible non-integer, sensationally "honest" but without original conscience, a man chronically uncertain of the meaning of his actions who would have influenced only those in a similar condition who, moreover, would look to him not for moral solutions but for the relief of having their personal unrest extended along the lines of pure sensibility. This is an ordinary Western notion of Dostoievsky's "non-conceptual" heroes, but to agree with it would mean, first, to be ignorant of the humble function he assigned to the "concept", and then to ascribe the æsthetic pre-eminence of the original over such "realistic" interpretations as this to qualities not essential to the creation of Myshkin.

BLACK BIRDS

The people who "fear for Europe" would watch with mixed feelings the revue now playing at the London Pavilion : "Florence Mills in Lew Leslie's *Black Birds,* with Johnny Hudgins and All-Star Cast of Coloured Artists". Certainly, Gibbon's reassurance still holds, that "Europe is secure from any future irruption of barbarians since before they can conquer they must cease to be barbarous . . . and themselves deserve a place among the polished nations whom they subdue". But intellectual hypochondriacs who see this show, which has pitched its tent at the exact centre of civilization, will be excused if on coming out into Piccadilly they have a momentary vision of the irruption as already accomplished. Horrors ! What ! that matrix of nobility violated? Its citizens fallen from their pristine valours? The Tubes sanded up, latrines out of bounds, the steady men in blue, the good-natured, disbanded? And Swan and Edgar's window models cruelly delivered to the pygmalionism they innocently provoked? No, the vision would be of a scene more normal and a change more complete than that. Our gaping ethnologist would see himself jostled by men of an alien race and skin who are better dressed than he, judged by the criterion of Savile Row ; more elegant in manner, judged by the conventions of his own society ; and quite possibly his superiors also in the knowledge of ethnology, tested by Cambridge standards.

Tolstoy remarked that Japan in fifty years had surpassed the whole boasted material civilization of the West. It was apparently easy for these quick-witted negroes to assimilate and bring to their proper perfection in farce the social conventions of rich modern democracies, where the hypocritical uses to which the equality doctrine is put emphasize the vulgarization of the aristocratic idea which is the real motive-force of the machine. Their dancing impressed me as a continuous disenchantment, a ridiculing in formal gestures of the idolatries of the social code. Watching it one saw the shabby aspirations and civilities of approved behaviour decomposed quickly into their ludicrous elements and re-shaped as jungle antics. The perception in these dances is purely social; there is, of course, no criticism of thought—processes such as certain Parisian *revues intimes* attempt. But the satiric tone is enforced by the sinister kind of detachment sometimes shown (perhaps by contagion) also by American vaudeville performers like the brothers Stanton.

The satire apart, there is great virtue in these dancers. Not only is their technique faultless; they have a primary feeling for the dance, which is a still rarer endowment. With the Russian Ballet one sometimes suspects that they are *illustrating* in gesture images which have been or can be expressed more directly in poetry or some other form. There is no pedantry of this kind in the negroes; their virtuosity is in no way eclectic. But this fact is also a measure of their artistic limitations. Their art does not aim farther than imitation and the rapid distortion which can impose a merely witty comment. So that in the penetrating impression made by their dancing one considerable element is felt to be missing—it might be called beauty, though that word is hardly justified, for any intention completely achieved in art is beautiful; and what is lacking here is rather the intellectual power which would impart a greater comprehensiveness to the images of the dance. It is the tradition of the step-dance, of which the negroes are masters, to judge the performer's success by the difficulty of the steps, and not by their appositeness to the rest of the dance. Difficulties overcome for their own sake certainly extend the means of expression, but at the same time they aggravate the problem of finding a general form in which the discoveries can be effectively used. What the negro dancers of the *Black Bird* Company need now is a choreographer ambitious to give a fuller meaning to their separate excellences in a ballet exploiting the rhythmical off-beat.

THE ART OF BEING RULED. By WYNDHAM LEWIS. CHATTO and WINDUS, 18/-

The Art of Being Ruled should stand towards our generation in the same relation that *Culture and Anarchy* did to the generation of the 'seventies. It has the same intention, ardently pursued but not hortatory, of arresting the degradation of the values on which our civilization seems to depend (threatened now by the barbarians *within*) and of re-asserting the terms on which the life of the intelligence may regain its proper ascendancy over the emotional and economic existence. The contemporary work is carried through with more audacity of speculation and fully analyses the degradation in its particular effects (as seen in socialist theory, sex-inversion, the emotionalism of philosophy, and the automatism of psychology theory) and it is the expression of a sensibility which naturally realizes its thoughts as concrete fictions and so presents the objects of its animus that in their trained distortion they are, as it were, auto-critical. This method is not without its disadvantages, and the gifts of rhetoric which Mr. Lewis possesses, to the permanent enrichment of English literature, are on occasions an embarrassment to the humbler mind plodding after coherence in the dust and gas of this high-powered, but tangential roadster.

There does not, however, emerge out of this bold and vital statement, admirable, like *The Fable of the Bees,* as social criticism and as literature, a motive-idea of the same comprehensiveness as Arnold's. The "intelligence" which Mr. Lewis places over against the amorphous, inhuman, *valueless* mess in which liberal-egalitarian-scientifico-humanitarianism has landed us is, when it expresses itself in the predominant æsthetic mode, the creator of forms and ideas, an organ; but the faculty that discriminates between the creations of the intelligence must surely be something other than the intelligence. However regrettable it may be, sweetness and light will not wholly supply us with a symbol for this want, since, as Mr. Lewis said in *The Caliph's Design*, "In any synthesis of the universe, the harsh, the hirsute, the enemies of the rose, must be built in for the purposes of a fine æsthetic, as of a fine logical, structure."

It is, perhaps, as if the intelligence, the creator, were masculine, and virtue or the taste the discriminating feminine: an essential dualism; and that the exigencies of the moment, the insidious vulgarization of every taste, has led to the erection of his rigid monism. But it is dangerous to touch even lightly on such metaphors after Mr. Lewis's treatment of the ideology of sex. So, although Mr. Lewis abundantly demonstrates the necessity for a more rigid demarcation of social functions than popular political ideas envisage, this would be a betterment of mechanism and would not infallibly lead, without being given a direction by our idea of value, to anything but a better mechanical functioning. There is still room for Arnold's reservation, "At any rate, we ourselves must put up with our friends' impatience and with their reproaches against cultivated inaction, and must still decline to lend a hand to their practical operations, until we, for our part at least, have grown a little clearer about the nature of real good, and have arrived nearer to a condition of mind out of which really fruitful and solid operations may spring."

Of course, Mr. Lewis is not the social reformer to whom those words were addressed. He has simply described the conditions of contemporary society as he sees them and the modification which they determine in its organization in the near future. There is no question of our "lending a hand", and Mr. Lewis merely suggests how these changes may be turned to the advantage of the intelligence. The monism of which I have spoken leads Mr. Lewis to ignore the combination of character and intelligence that constitutes personality. It is as though he accepted the fable of the yahoos and houhynhynms as a piece of natural history. He himself does not value much above yahoos men who are unquestionably intelligences on any definition of intelligence he provides—but as to what further categorical of judgment he uses for their dismissal, he leaves us rather in the dark. But to suppose that the intelligence or houyhnhnm is ever free of the yahoo or "small man" on the inner stage of character is to reduce the intelligence to a mechanical function. So, too, to say of the intellectual, "this greatest and most valuable of all 'producers' should be accommodated with conditions suitable to his maximum productivity" is still further to emphasize the function to the disadvantage of the complete human being. And, in thus isolating intelligence from character, he is handing over the intelligence to social conformity. The accommodation of this "most valuable worker" presumes a contract between the intelligence and the powers, and this, since it is volitional, might be more damaging to the intelligence than the hostility of circumstances. Though I do not agree with the comfortably rich who would keep the intellectual on low rations to promote his productivity (this was not the sort of accommodation Mr. Lewis referred to), if such be the price of freedom it must be paid. For the intelligence has, unlike the "small man", a real freedom and one that can only be taken away by consent—the right of refusing to produce. The bureaucratic caste of intellectual specialists, which is actually in process of formation, and of which Mr. Lewis suggests some important extensions (see *The Public and the Private Life*), is another matter. You are not there dealing with imponderables.

The intellectual whom Mr. Lewis has in mind is not, of course, the Bloomsbury eclectic, fashion-ridden dilettante nor the immutably senile caricature of wisdom of shavian myth; he is much more like an artist, a painter, or a sculptor. Mr. Lewis approaches his description by negation, as the mystics define God: "I have defined art as the science of the *outside* of things, and natural science as the science of the inside of things. . . . A preoccupation with the *vitals* of things is related to *vitalist* enthusiasms. 'Life' (of the 'Up life! down art!' cry) means invariably the smoking-hot *inside* of things, in contrast to the hard, cold, formal skull or carapace. The *emotional* of the bergsonian dogma is the heat, moisture, shapelessness, and tremor of the vitals of life. The *intellectual* is the ectodermic case, the ideality of the animal machine, *with its skin on.*

"Finally, the bergsonian (jamesque, psycho-analytic, Wagnerian Venusburg) philosophy of the hot *vitals*—of the bloodstream, of vast cosmic emotion, gush, and flow—is that of a *blind* organism. There are no Eyes in that philosophy. It *sees* no more than the embryo: it is hardly yet male or female: it is sightless and neuter. It is the creed of a sightless, ganglionic mass, in short: and as such invites to that 'eternity of intoxication' of the gibe of Plato".

This is a passably emotional passage (with its underlinings so like a woman's compensation for her inability to express her conceptions with the force she feels them—what does Mr. Lewis need with such tricks?) in which to condemn the emotionalism of Freud, Bergson, James, and Wagner. It is an example of the weakness of the Eye or superficial and metaphorical sense unaccompanied by analysis. The "inside" and "outside" of his first definition lead to the guts and carapace by the associational path, not the intellectual, and the physical analogy does nothing really to support the argument. The whole thing starts from a metaphor, because, though bodies have an inside and an ouside, we cannot say that ideas have; everything must be outside to the consciousness, and Bergson must have externalized something to make Mr. Lewis feel so much. There is here a tendency in Mr. Lewis to too much estimate ideas politically, by the disgraceful reasons for which they are popular and not by their private content. And, though we think that this attitude recalls us to a better sense of æsthetic values, if literature at any rate confined itself to the carapace, it would be very much poorer art than it has been in the past. Yet Mr. Lewis would regard as superficial, in the good sense, that is as subjects proper for art, many things that are commonly considered profound and mysterious, the tragic destiny, for example. The keenness of his response to literary art is evident in many passages in this book. It is the tangential method of composition we mentioned which introduces some confusion into our comprehension, and also the treatment of pure concepts as if they were in themselves, not merely in their vulgar shapes, susceptible to emotional manipulation. And in the end we know what Mr. Lewis's "intelligence" does not stand for, but what it is, unless a kind of temperament, does not emerge.

The plastic possibilities which may be operated on the individual and which Mr. Lewis, with science, puts into the future of the race, are the old aspirations which the mind rose to long before the era of machinery. "Do you want to be a god?" Mr. Lewis asks. That aspiration is certainly rarer than is sentimentally supposed, though certain sections of the public are well-catered for by Mr. Wells and Mr. Murry as to "gods". It is, no doubt, simply "one of the higher human classifications which, owing to scientific method, men could now attempt". Only the dependence on scientific method seems to me a little gratuitous, and there are men who have not waited for its assistance. The social naturalism to which Mr. Lewis has disciplined himself, and owing to which this book dominates the febrile excitations of the time, might be tempered to an even keener edge by some slight admixture with the ecstatic or "feminine" principle which he keeps at arms-length.

EDGELL RICKWORD.

REASON AND ROMANTICISM. By HERBERT READ. FABER and GWYER, 7/6.

The reading of a few pages of Mr. Read's volume gives the impression that here are to be found critical qualities entirely absent in the average work of contemporary criticism. Nor is this impression without justification. Mr. Read has, in fact, many of the virtues of a first-rate critic; he has exceptional intelligence, learning, a philosophic mind, intellectual honesty, and a passion for literature of sufficient integrity to require an establishment of its relations with the general body of contemporary scientific and psychological knowledge. To quote the dust cover, the author's "general object is to establish scientific standards of criticism in place of the vague and illogical abuse of appreciation". These are qualifications rare enough to justify the reader in expecting critical results of some validity and importance. Results, however, are precisely what Mr. Read does not give us; despite his closely reasoned prose with its air of the continual solution of a problem, the conclusion of his thought perpetually evades him; and, while inconclusiveness in itself is neither a merit nor a fault, it is a singular characteristic in a writer endeavouring to establish a method of criticism based on the logical conclusion of thought in dogma.

Nevertheless, if Mr. Read's criticism does not live up to its promises, it is the product of an intelligence remarkable enough to make the reasons for its failure of interest. Indeed, were Mr. Read less intelligent, the conclusion that emerges from his book would be less obvious, that "intelligence", in the sense in which it is sometimes used by writers of the school to which Mr. Read belongs, is by itself an inadequate instrument for criticism. (The sense, for example, in which Mr. Read himself uses it when he remarks of the present state of poetry, "It is largely a question of a lack of intelligence at certain crises in the history of poetry since Baudelaire": a sentence one has only to place between inverted commas to expose the particular kind of insincerity and fatuity to which Mr. Read, in spite of his honesty of purpose, is continually liable). It is needless to defend intelligence, without which this volume would be unreadable. But, while intelligence is the negative principle of criticism and enables a writer to see the pitfalls that attend every line of thought, without talent he is unable to escape them. The foundation of critical theory is the elementary act of discrimination, based on the instinctive and unquestionable sense of values we call talent, from which creation also proceeds. Without this the rest is distraction, more or less intellectual according to our preference for chess or beggar-my-neighbour. And, while it is embarrassing to state facts implicit in the act of criticism at all, it is necessary if we are to explain the sensation of falsity we receive from every one of Mr. Read's apparently rigorously candid essays.

For the fact is that Mr. Read, with all his gifts, is fundamentally uncertain about primary matters on which certainty is the *sine quâ non* of any criticism of value. And, while he is intelligent enough to know what certainty should be, its reality escapes him. He quotes, for example, with approval the following passage from M. Ramon Fernandez :—" Le jugement critique implique un effort de définition et de distribution objective qui nous aide à surmonter et à corriger l'état de plaisir indéfinissable. Bien. Mais où nous ne sommes plus guidés par un plaisir immédiat et impérieux, nous risquons de l'être uniquement par une représentation idéale; nous risquons de substituer cette représentation à la réalité esthétique; d'où confusion nouvelle, pour le moins aussi grave que l'autre, car nous inclinerons à mettre une œuvre médiocre qui présentera les caractères que nous avons définis, au-dessus d'une œuvre éminente d'où ces caractères seront absents." But this does not prevent him from committing precisely those errors he warns himself and us against. An essay on "The nature of metaphysical poetry" included in the volume is an ingenious illustration of a framework of thought constructed on premises that are either false or left unexamined. That is to say that Mr. Read's intuitions are insufficiently strong, his taste too uncertain, to avoid the temptation to include in the same intellectual category poets unassimilable on any valid grounds by a critic with an objective and unprejudiced sense of reality. Moreover, from the very fact that Mr. Read works out his premises conscientiously, their falsity becomes continually apparent, driving him into quibbles regrettable in a writer of capacity. To mention one of many, it is his contention that Dante and Cavalcanti are "metaphysical" poets in the sense in which this epithet is commonly applied to those English poets from whom he chooses Donne and Chapman as exemplars. A metaphysical poet, says Mr. Read, "is one in whom there exists at one and the same time abstract thought and feeling for that thought expressed in poetry". . . "All true metaphysical poets strike fire in the very process of their reasoning"; and he quotes two passages of Donne and Chapman in illustration. Yet, to Dante, he admits, "the world was not a problem, to be resolved by experimental effort, but the particularly neat scheme so amply provided by St. Thomas Aquinas. This vicariousness is not without its effect on the metaphysical quality of Dante's poetry, for the fusion of thought and emotion is surely more apt to be produced when thought has all the freshness of a personal discovery. But only *more* apt", and so on in the style of Mr. Baldwin expounding his attitude to the miners. It is surely remarkable that the poet he chooses as the first of metaphysical poets, of poets who "strike fire in the very process of their reasoning" should have left his reasoning, in Mr. Read's sense, to be done for him by someone else. Mr. Read even quotes a sentence in which Dante defines with sufficient clarity the method by which he produced his effects, of a kind that may be looked for with as much chance of success in Keats or Shelley as in Donne or Chapman. The whole meaning of metaphysical poetry, says Mr. Read, may be found in the "anagogic" value of literature, the *senso anagogico,* which occurs, in Dante's words, "when a writing is spiritually expounded, which even in the literal sense, by the very things it signifies, signifies higher matters of eternal glory". "This," continues Mr. Read, "is a bold interfusion of thought and actuality. Dante and Cavalcanti in perfect seriousness identified their love of philosophy with their love of women; and in singing of their love of women they made an allegory that expressed their love of philosophy. In that manner they made their writings *sovra senso,* or anagogic. Or, more exactly, all experience, whether intellectual or sensual or instinctive, was regarded as equally and contemporaneously the subject-matter of their poetry". Several paragraphs of the same kind of thing follow, equally without meaning in the face of Dante's quite unambiguous description of the effect he obtains when, to take the first example that comes to mind, he uses a current theory that the damned are aware of the future but not of the present, and charges it with the immediate æsthetic significance of tragic art. If this is "the whole meaning of metaphysical poetry", it would be more accurate to find another name for Donne and Chapman who, in the passages quoted by Mr. Read as essentially "metaphysical", resemble Shakespeare very much more than they do Dante; as is to be expected, indeed, when one considers that the seeds of metaphysical poetry, in the sense in which the poetry of Donne and Chapman was metaphysical, in the sense of "felt thought", to use Mr. Read's phrase, are mainly to be found in the texture of Shakespeare's later verse. In any case, however, it is unlikely that attempts to define metaphysical poetry will be successful, since we are dealing not with a critical term, but with an emotional symbol (as naturalism, realism, classicism, etc.) whereby, indeed, certain current creative processes may be recognized, but, as is the function of a symbol, precisely those processes that are still incapable of definition. Should such processes find their natural resolution in production, and the kind of poetry come to birth that, unborn, finds its image in the heterogeneous poets that pass as metaphysical, the imaginary criticism given us by Mr. Read will disappear with the image, and with the provision for criticism of its proper sustenance in contemporary creation.

There is not space in a review to substantiate in detail the similar charges to be brought against all of Mr. Read's essays. But in each are to be found the same ostensible integrity of purpose, the same appearance of dealing with subjects of vital contemporary significance, the same atmosphere of intellectual excitement, and the same conclusion in smoke, confusion, or platitude. "Emotion in subjection—that is the very definition of art!" *"Leger et profond* ! It is the secret of all art", are two characteristic discoveries of the author. Nevertheless, if culture, honesty, and intelligence are insufficient in themselves to produce criticism of permanent value, they are qualities rare enough to put Mr. Read's volume in another category from the criticism to which we are accustomed.

J. F. HOLMS.

THE WORLD OF WILLIAM CLISSOLD. By H. G. WELLS. Books I and II. BENN, 7/6.

The World of William Clissold is, we are told, a novel. We are assured it is a novel, and nothing but a novel. We are not allowed to think of it even as a "mental autobiography" of Mr. Wells. It is a novel.

Let us hope so. For, having finished this first volume, nothing but the hope of finding something in the two volumes yet to appear will restrain us from asserting, roundly and flatly, that this is simply not good enough to be called a novel. If *Tono-Bungay* is a novel, then this is not one.

We have with us the first volume of *The World of William Clissold.* The second volume will appear on October 1st, the third on November 1st. We may still hope, then, if we wish to.

This first volume consists of "A Note before the Title-Page", in which we are forbidden to look on this book as anything but a novel, and especially forbidden to look on it as a *roman à clef*: which means we mustn't identify the characters with any living people such as, for instance, Mr. Winston Churchill or the Countess of Oxford and Asquith; which negative command is very easy to obey, since, in this first volume, at least, there are no created characters at all: it is all words, words, words, about Socialism and Karl Marx, bankers and cave-men, money and the superman. One would welcome any old scarecrow of a character on this dreary, flinty hillside of abstract words.

The next thing is the title-page: "The World of William Clissold: A Novel from a New Angle"—whatever that pseudo-scientific phrase may mean.

Then comes *Book I*: *The Frame of the Picture.* All right, we think! If we must get the frame first, and the picture later, let's make the best of the frame.

The frame consists of William Clissold informing us that he is an elderly gentleman of fifty-nine, and that he is going to tell us all about himself. He is quite well-off, having made good in business, so that now he has retired and has bought a house near Cannes, and is going to tell us everything, absolutely everything about himself: insisting rather strongly that he is and always has been a somewhat scientific gentleman with an active mind, and that his mental activities have been more important than any other activity in his life. In short, he is not a "mere animal", he is an animal with a ferocious appetite for "ideas", and enormous thinking powers.

Again, like a submissive reader, we say: "Very well! proceed!"; and we sit down in front of this mental gentleman. William Clissold immediately begins to tell us what he believes, what he always has believed, and what he hasn't always believed, and what he won't believe, and we feel how superior he is to other people who believe other mere things. He talks about God, is very uneasy because of Roman Catholics—like an Early Victorian—and is naughtily funny about Mr. G.—which can mean either Mr. Gladstone or Mr. God.

But we bear up. After all, God, or Mr. G., is only the frame for William Clissold. We must put up with a frame of some sort. And God turns out to be Humanity in its nobler or disinterestedly scientific aspect: or the Mind of Men collectively: in short, William Clissold himself, in a home-made halo. Still, after all, it is only a frame. Let us get on to the picture.

Mr. Clissold, being somewhat of an amateur at making a self-portrait and framing it, has got bits of the picture stuck on to the frame, and great angular sections of the frame occupying the space where the picture should be. But patience! It is a sort of futuristic interpenetration, perhaps.

The first bit of the story is a little boy at a country house, sitting in a boat and observing the scientific phenomena of refraction and reflection. He also observes some forget-me-nots on the bank, and rather likes the look of them. So, scrambling carefully down through mud and sedges, he clutches a handful of the blue flowers, only to find his legs scratched and showing blood, from the sedges. "Oh! Oh! I cried in profound dismay. . . Still do I remember most vividly my astonishment at the treachery of that golden, flushed, and sapphire-eyed day.—That it should turn on me!"

This "section" is called "The Treacherous Forget-me-nots". But since, after all, the forget-me-nots had never asked the boy to gather them, wherein lay the treachery?

But they represent poetry. And perhaps William Clissold means to convey that, scrambling after poetry, he scratched his legs, and fell to howling, and called the poetry treacherous.

As for a child thinking that the sapphire-eyed day had turned on him—what a dreary old-boy of a child, if he did! But it is elderly-gentleman psychology, not childish.

The story doesn't get on very fast, and is extremely sketchy. The elderly Mr. Clissold is obviously bored by it himself. Two little boys, their mother and father, move from Bexhill to a grand country house called Mowbray. In the preface we are assured that Mowbray does not exist on earth, and we can well believe it. After a few years, the father of the two boys, a mushroom city magnate, fails, is arrested as a swindler, convicted, and swallows potassium cyanide. We have no vital glimpse of him. He never says anything, except "Hello, Sonny!". And he does ask the police to have some *déjeuner* with him, when he is arrested. The boys are trailed round Belgium by a weeping mother, who also is not created, and with whom they are only bored. The mother marries again: the boys go to the London University: and the story is lost again in a vast grey drizzle of words.

William Clissold, having in *The Frame* written a feeble resumé of Mr. Wells's *God the Invisible King,* proceeds in *The Story, Book II,* to write a much duller resumé of Mr. Wells's *Outline of History.* Cavemen, nomads, patriarchs, tribal Old Men, out they all come again, in the long march of human progress. Mr. Clissold, who holds forth against "systems", cannot help systematizing us all into a gradual and systematic uplift from the ape. There is also a complete *exposé* of Socialism and Karl Marxism and finance, and a denunciation of Communism. There is a little feeble praise of the pure scientist who does physical research in a laboratory, and a great contempt of professors and dons who lurk in holes and study history. Last, and not least, there is a contemptuous sweeping of the temple, of all financiers, bankers, and money-men: they are all unscientific, untrained semi-idiots monkeying about with things they know nothing of.

And so, rather abruptly, end of Vol. I.

Except, of course, William Clissold has been continually taking a front seat in the picture, aged fifty-nine, in the villa back of Cannes. There is a slim slip of a red-haired Clem, who ruffles the old gentleman's hair.

" 'It's no good!' she said. 'I can't keep away from you to-day.' And she hasn't! She has ruffled my hair, she has also ruffled my mind"—much more important, of course, to William C.

This is the young Clementina: "She has a mind like one of those water-insects that never get below the surface of anything. . . She professes an affection for me that is altogether monstrous"—I should say so—"and she knows no more about my substantial self than the water-insect knows of the deeps of the pond. . . . She knows as little about the world".

Poor Clementina, that lean, red-haired slip of a young thing. She is no more to him than an adoring sort of mosquito. But oh! wouldn't we like to hear all she *does* know about him, this sexagenarian bore, who says of her: "the same lean, red-haired Clem, so absurdly insistent that she idolizes me, and will have no other man but me, invading me whenever she dares, and protecting me", etc.—

Clementina, really, sounds rather nice. What a pity *she* didn't herself write *The World of William Clissold*: it would have been a novel, then. But she wouldn't even look at the framework of that world, says Clissold. And we don't blame her.

What is the elderly gentleman doing with her at all? Is it his "racial urge", as he calls it, still going on, rather late in life? We imagine the dear little bounder saying to her: "You are the mere object of my racial urge". To which, no doubt, she murmurs in the approved Clissold style: "My King!"

But it is altogether a poor book: the effusion of a peeved elderly gentleman who has nothing to grumble at, but who peeves at everything, from Clem to the High Finance, and from God, or Mr. G., to Russian Communism. His effective self is disgruntled, his ailment is a peevish, ashy indifference to *everything,* except himself, himself as centre of the universe. There is not one gleam of sympathy with anything in all the book, and not one breath of passionate rebellion. Mr. Clissold is too successful and wealthy to rebel and too hopelessly peeved to sympathize.

What has got him into such a state of peevishness is a problem: unless it is his insistence on the Universal Mind, which he, of course, exemplifies. The emotions are to him irritating aberrations. Yet even he admits that even thought must be preceded by some obscure physical happenings, some kind of confused sensation or emotion which is the necessary coarse body of thought and from which thought, living thought, arises or sublimates.

This being so, we wonder that he so insists on the Universal or racial *mind* of man, as the only hope or salvation. If the mind is fed from the obscure sensations, emotions, physical happenings inside us, if the mind is really no more than an exhalation of these, is it not obvious that without a full and subtle emotional life the mind itself must wither: or that it must turn itself into an automatic sort of grind-mill, grinding upon itself?

And in that case the superficial Clementina no doubt knows far more about the "deeps of the pond" of Mr. Clissold than that tiresome gentleman knows himself. He grinds on and on at the stale bones of sociology, while his actual living goes to pieces, falls into a state of irritable peevishness which makes his "mental autobiography" tiresome. His scale of values is all wrong.

So far, anyhow, this work is not a novel, because it contains none of the passionate and emotional reactions which are at the root of all thought, and which must be conveyed in a novel. This book is all chewed-up newspaper, and chewed-up scientific reports, like a mouse's nest. But perhaps the novel will still come: in Vols. II and III.

For, after all, Mr. Wells is not Mr. Clissold, thank God! And Mr. Wells has given us such brilliant and such very genuine novels that we can only hope the Clissold "angle" will straighten out in Vol. II.

D. H. LAWRENCE.

CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN LITERATURE, 1881-1925. By D. S. MIRSKY. ROUTLEDGE, 12/6.

I would start this by insisting that at bottom every other person than the author is foreign to him; his potential public; and we must not, by taking only certain more exciting references of the words we use, be confused by the fortuitous divisions of that public: into social classes and countries. It may happen that two countries—geographical divisions of the public—are remarkably near one to the other in culture, as, say, England and France; it may also be that between two social classes in the same country the gulf is so great that little can pass directly between them, of which an example would be the educated class and the unskilled labour class. England, as a group, is better able to comprehend France's Racine than the English unskilled labourer class is to comprehend England's Donne. In any case, even when we have a public of the same country and social class, it is a notorious fact that lapse of time is frequently necessary for the author's comprehension.

The case of the foreigner merely is that he has two great additional obstacles to overcome which do not exist between members of the same class and country. These are the obstacles of unfamiliar language (a difficult thing to master) and unfamiliar milieu (customs, climate, etc.). The same obstacles, just as difficult to circumvent, exist between different classes in the same country, but, if we limit ourselves to considering only that layer of the public which constitutes the ruling class—which roughly corresponds to the educated class—we see that, if time is frequently essential for the appreciation of authors by natives, considerable more time is necessary for the foreigner. The task, however, is not impossible, as Prince Mirsky (who has been known to write criticism of English books) would appear to wish to hint in the preface to the work here reviewed.

But, when we remember the time factor, it is not surprising (however grieving) that England (by which, in this article, must be meant intellectual England, "for, after all, only intellectuals are interested in Russian literature") under "Russian literature since 1880" seems to understand principally Tchekov, Gorky, and Andreiev, together, if one is to judge by the recent fuss made over some plays translated, with Lunacharsky. The barriers of unfamiliar language and very unfamiliar milieu have, indeed, till now proved much too great; and "the omniscient geniuses of the West", as Prince Mirsky calls them with suitable scorn, have been far too busy, in what seemed to them the happy hunting ground for cheap religious and philosophical argumentation, "exercising their intuitive powers", "unhampered . . . by excess of irrelevant and needless information".

For that reason Prince Mirsky's book, full of compactlyplaced information, comes as a God-sent guide; the more useful that, in spite of the "too intimate acquaintance with concrete detail" which prevented him from giving us "bird's-eye views", Prince Mirsky has so valiantly detached himself from local feelings that, if one subtracts a very understandable over-estimation of Russian poets, and leniency (fruit of restraint) in dealing with those he condemns, from the wonderful array of un-bird's-eye-view evaluations of the work of fully 150 writers, one finds oneself left with a very fair panorama of the period. In other words, to advise those who know the names of Tchekov, Gorky, and Andreiev to follow Prince Mirsky's guide in stepping past them is not to advise them to avoid the frying-pan and step into the fire, by substituting for their mistaken foreigner's premature view a mistaken native's prejudiced view;—for that matter, Prince Mirsky's book will certainly become a handbook for Russians too, as nothing to compare with it exists in that language.

Prince Mirsky's book is refreshing because his opinions are not served up in the conventional language of literary handbooks. He does not hesitate to speak plainly and honestly about writers who are still living or but recently dead, as when he says, of Merezhkovsky, "he is a victim of ideas. If he had never tried to have any, he might have developed into a good novelist for boys"; or of Balmont that his work for "the greater part" is "quite worthless"; or of Bloch "he was a man neither of great brains nor of great moral strength. Nor was he really a great craftsman"; or of Lunacharsky, "his prose is below the level of decent journalism. His verse would have been considered hopelessly flat and ineffective even in the days of Nadson. His dramas . . . are piteously puerile attempts at allegories of the worst and most tiresome kind".

The book is also pleasant to read because of the occasional slightly malicious seasoning Prince Mirsky allows to flavour his otherwise sober style; as when, writing of the "conscience-stricken nobleman" Garshin, whose "delicate moral constitution" gave way under the strain, and who finally flung himself down some stairs, broke his leg, and died from the effects, we are told, in proof of the "charm of his person", that "his eyes especially are said to have been unique and unforgettable"; or as when, writing of Tchekov, he says that the dominant note of a group of stories is "superstition, the vague terror before the presences that haunt the dark and empty steppe", and adds "(Tchekov makes it poetical)". In fact, although it is a handbook that is a mine of information, it is at the same time a book that may be read by the most lay layman with pleasure; and it is a book of such importance that, even if there were any, chasing small errors to show a reviewer's superiority which does not exist would be space wasted. Nevertheless, Prince Mirsky is too optimistic when he thinks that all interest in Artsybashev's *Sanin* has died, and that it "is significant that *Sanin* has not been reprinted even outside of Russia", since the book was redone by the *Moskov-*

skoie Knjigoizdateljstvo in 1921 in Berlin. It is also tempting to ask why (in the chapter entitled "Literary Criticism" at least) mention is not made of Shtchogolev (or "Shchegolev") of whose *Duel and Death of Pushkin* Prince Mirsky says, in his own book on Pushkin published in English, it is "a 'definitive' and exhaustive work of the highest value", and, "unlike the great majority of Russian biographical works", "quite readable"; but no doubt there is a good reason.

Although the book is (Prince Mirsky in his preface insists) without bird's-eye views, nevertheless, a panorama, let us say, of the period may be gained from the step by step, writer by writer, detail of information and evaluation that is amassed. This is to say, Prince Mirsky makes it clear that the outline of Russian literature from 1881 to these days is the struggle against and away from social considerations (from an attitude, the result of the work of the critic Belinsky, which dates from the end of the thirties of the nineteenth century,) towards an independent position for literature. After the thirties of the nineteenth century, poets and novelists alike were for decades judged by their contribution to the resolution of Russia's state of social discord, and it is as potential prophets and seers that the western world has learned to regard them.

It is no wonder, then, that we have, as a nation, such a crooked view of Russian writers, since those of their countrymen who might have been our guides have themselves taught us to take up this false position. Even the present adoration of Anton Tchekov, which in the face of criticism is now so firmly entrenched in the position that he is regarded as a great artist of the short story and the play, proceeds from the same false starting-point, since his plays deal essentially with a situation of social change and his stories of uneasiness (similar to the change and uneasiness we tremble to admit we ourselves experience to-day), and it is for his poetizing of this that he is admired. The traditional attitude towards Russian writers, that is, has disposed middle class England, in a fit of weariness at the end of an epoch of "democracy", to find solace in this foreign writer who "fixes his attention on the infinitesimals, the 'pinpricks' and 'straws' of the soul".

It will be interesting to see in what way Prince Mirsky deals with this question in the book he has in preparation,* to which the present volume is a continuation, but it would seem that the damming up, after the Decembrist dilettante fiasco, of the natural process of *economic* change, by which the unpractical and expensive (in the modern world) though otherwise excellent system of serfdom would have been rapidly changed for a more rational one for getting work out of the peasants, resulted in Russia from, say, 1835 onwards in a state of tension or discord. This it is that turned the majority of Russian writers, under the whip of their critics and the tantalizing goad of the censor, towards concentrating on the social problem; and resulted, after the promising sprightliness of early Gogol and the promising satire of young Lermontov, in what is, after all, the dreary quagmire that begins with Goncharov and goes, through Dostoievsky and Tolstoy, down to Tchekov and Andreiev. All these writers, and it is time that this be admitted even in the case of Dostoievsky and Tolstoy (on whom, of course, in a handbook, Prince Mirsky can scarcely be expected to lay hands), are more concerned with solving set problems of human relations than simply with making books that deal with humans. Because of their natural gifts (in which lies some deception), Dostoievsky and Tolstoy (the former largely, the latter in great patches) transcend these small but hindering considerations of man and society; but the gruesome fact remains that these giants are, as writers, chronically diseased. There is the eternal question of what is their duty to Russia and mankind corrupting their books.

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* *"The present history of Russian literature since 1881 is planned so as to form a continuation of a book which I am preparing on the period preceding that date."*

But, however Prince Mirsky may find fittest to represent the causes of the critical attitude generally ascribed to Belinsky, there is no mistaking the way in which, in this book, dealing with 1881-1925, he draws the movement of Russian literature towards a liberation from ulterior motives—a liberation that, naturally enough, came at the time when, in a final disintegration (the fruit of the damming up of a century before) there was no more point for those ulterior motives. That he feels this movement is most marked in the way in which he dwells lovingly (and justly) on those writers who, in what I call the quagmire epoch, wrote as men for men; and, for that reason, are first really appreciated to-day. Such are, in particular, Leskov and Leontiev, both writers who are specially worthy of the notice of English readers to-day—Leskov because he is an extraordinarily downright taleteller, with vast store of humour and a profound, not one-sided, knowledge of his countrymen, (an energetic translator is still needed); and Leontiev especially because he was that rarity, a constructive conservative in a period of dissolution, and much can be learned from a study of him.

It is not till we get to the first years of this century that we find a bulk of works by writers who had cast off the fetters of the social critics—the produce of the Symbolist movement, of the formation and ideals of which Prince Mirsky gives, for the cloudiness of the subject, a very clear picture. Poetry is, in any case, the most difficult form of writing to judge of in a foreign tongue, and it is also the form which, by making the greatest emotional appeal, disposes its critic, if a native, to an exaggerated view of its value; and it is in this that the one serious weakness of Prince Mirsky's book may be discovered. It is a weakness that he could scarcely avoid, but, for example, when he writes of Annensky's "baffling subtleness and precision" and the "creative effort required" to master him, one feels (especially after looking through Annensky again) that his sound critical judgment has forsaken him. Nor are the two rather banal lyrics he gives adequate prose translations of likely to support his opinion in the eyes of his reader.

We are up here, it must be admitted, in part against the "imponderables" of which our author is fond of writing. Each poet of value, by going a step further forward, impregnates everyday words and phrases with new appearance of being specially significant; and the most banal poem, apart from subject and actual words, may contain such significant language; but imponderables of this kind are exceedingly ephemeral, most of them passing with the memory of the dialect and intonation of their period; and one cannot help regretting that, in his enthusiasm for the possibilities of his beautiful mother-tongue in verse, Prince Mirsky had not maintained a more detached view.

It is an unfortunate justification of my criticism that, at the same time as declaring Bloch was no craftsman and had no brains, he defines his lyrics written between 1908 and 1916 as "certainly the greatest body of poetry written by a Russian poet within the last eighty years". In other words, Bloch's greatness relies solely on his fortuitous skill in beautifying Russian words; and, although Bloch did occasionally use his brains, the fact that one of his most famous poems is that very common piece "The Stranger" (Neznakomka), "among his earliest and most charming masterpieces"—part of which Prince Mirsky is rash enough to print—cannot speak well for his work or for Russian poetry in the opinion of the unversed foreigner who reads Prince Mirsky's book.

For that reason it is only fair to Russian poetry to advise the reader to underline what Prince Mirsky says on p. 199 about Sologub's lyrics: "Their beauty is classical . . . as in all classic poetry the poet's silences are as important as his words . . . It is the most refined and most delicate of all Russian poetry"; on p. 275 about Pasternak—"it is very tempting to compare Pasternak with Donne"; on pp. 262-3, of Marina Tsvetaeva, where to "For rhythmical swing she has few equals" and "her poetry infects not by what it expresses, but by the sheer force of its motion", and "except Bloch in 'The Twelve' no one has ever achieved anything of the sort (her 'King-Maiden') with the aid of Russian songs: it is a wonderful fugue on a popular theme, and, unlike the greater poet's poem, it is free from every trace of mysticism"—a marginal might be added that, if one is to judge by the poem "The Hill" Prince Mirsky publishes in his new quasi-periodical "Versty", this poet is learning to ruminate and give more permanent body to her "fire, enthusiasm, and passion". It is also tempting to suggest that Prince Mirsky is too reserved in praise of the young poets Tikhonov and Selvinsky, (see page 279), whose work, in its polished refinement and crudity, is most stimulating.

But, in spite of Sologub's enamels, Pasternak's sparkling brain-poems, and Marina Tsvetaeva's great promise, and the constructivists' vigorous virtuosity, one is brought in the end to admit that the strength of Russian literature lies in its prose. Of whatever value it may be to its local public (i.e., to Russians) for its development of life as a symptom of change (liberation from a false position) the fact remains that Russian poetry is of little importance. This is not the case with the thoroughly mature prose work (independent of secondary considerations) which, after the Symbolist movement had reached middle age, developed in and through Byely and Remizov; and, if English intellectuals ("for, after all, only intellectuals are interested in Russian literature") wish to find something first-class worth reading and studying (that is, both interesting and instructive) in Russian literature, they will find it (to mention four outstanding names) in the work of Leskov and Leontiev of an older generation, and Byely and Remizov of this. Although patience and forbearance are needed (especially in *The Silver Dove*) in forging through it, Byely's "ornamental prose" with its "musical architecture" is a remarkable revelation; and of Remizov, with his striking flexibility of style (ranging from the complicated ornamentalism of the *Sisters of the Cross* to the childlike simplicity of *Olya Ilmenev*), his humour, irony, passion, and hieratic solemnity, and withal artistic detachment, it would be foolish, with Prince Mirsky's sound (though restrained) account before me, to do more than quote the significant conclusion of his criticism—"Remizov the craftsman, linguist, and realist has a numerous following—the poet and mystic remains barren of influence"—and add that, poet and mystic subtracted, most of Remizov still remains.

Another great writer in whom, in the coming decade, an increasing interest will be taken, is that interesting, but unbalanced, stylist, Rozanov. It is curious, though, that Prince Mirsky, who speaks of the "two aspects of Sologub's work", "his Manichæan idealism, and the peculiar 'complex' which is the result of a perverse and long-suppressed libido", has not applied any psycho-analytic clichés to Rozanov's "naturalistic religion of sex and procreation".

Beside the movement towards an independent literature, one other important thing—the present direction of Russian prose-writers—is made clear for us by Prince Mirsky's panorama. We find it summed up in his own words, where, towards the end of his book, about to write of the Russian bestseller Ehrenburg, he says "The literary Western novel still remains to be created by the Russian novelist". That this is a constant worry to Prince Mirsky we may judge by the many references, open or veiled, to this Russian want. His malicious remark about Merezhkovsky, which I have quoted, is an example, and what he writes early in the book of Kuprin is another—"Kuprin had in him a valuable germ which remained almost undeveloped: he was attracted towards the 'Western' type of story, which unlike the Russian story is a story of action and strong situations. . . He never succeeded in casting aside his intelligentsia-ism and in setting out to write à la Jack London".

So now, ironically enough, at a time when England is still ready to snatch at and gloat over more Tchekov, or rake over the morbid remains of Dostoievsky and Tolstoy, Russia (which in any case offers us the robuster and better cooked food of Leskov and Remizov) is striving blindly towards creating what we have long known how to manufacture—the story of adventure—so that Prince Mirsky finds hope, not only in the young writers, Babel and Pasternak, but also (with some justification, perhaps) in the latest work of the pre-war Andreiev school sensationalist, Sergeiev-Tsensky!

The main characteristic of the latest Russian prose works, whether the style be ornamental or simple, is the pageant of plain hard action they contain; and this concern with directness and matter-of-factness is reflected in the formalists' useful clearing out of the critics' lumber-room, a work supplemented in England by Messrs. Ogden and Richards in the theory of language and criticism.

Russia, that is, is striving in prose towards the decently-clothed penny dreadful; towards a classical Jack Londonism. In our own country, on the other hand, the abundant emulation of one-time Russian metaphysico-social havering has driven thousands of honest and educated men to Sunday afternoons with the latest detective novel. Those who naturally have vitality in them seek fresh stores of it when they are fatigued and need the recreation the arts provide, where they can find it. Most naturally, and unfortunately, they will revel in stereotyped rubbish until the story of *action* and *things* is recreated. Will the Russians beat us in the race?

It is unfortunate to conclude an inadequate notice of Prince Mirsky's book with home moralizing, but his wide and courageous review of the last forty-five years seems so sound and, for us, because of the bird's-eye view that comes, in spite of its author, out of it, so epoch-making, that the temptation was too great to be resisted.

ALEC BROWN.

THE BAKED MOLE

IF anyone at Dodder took a special interest in Mr. Meek, other than the necessary interest that the moles took in him, that person was Mr. Meek's son, Jimmy.

Others, of course, saw Mr. Meek, but not in the same way as his son saw him, who, though but seven years old, had a very inquisitive mind.

Every Sunday, Mr. Meek was properly noticed by the congregation in church and by Mr. Hayball, the clergyman. The good people had long ago decided that Mr. Meek was a very religious man, who was taken every Sunday to church by his own walking-stick.

Along the lane to the church, Mr. Meek's walking-stick, a finely varnished one with a good crooked handle, would conduct Mr. Meek when the first bell rang, and would warily touch the mud in the lane, but tap the church carpet possessively. That Mr. Meek was a good man and a kind one everyone believed, for he could be nothing else with such a stick and with such a beard—a beard that exactly resembled St. Peter's that was always so much admired in the east window.

Whenever Mr. Hayball referred to the way that God chastens the faithful, he would think of Mr. Meek, whose wife lay stricken with a cancer and who was utterly unable to leave her bed.

Perhaps it may have been Sarah Meek's fault that she wasn't so interested in her husband as her son Jimmy, for, instead of being grateful to him for his care of her, she would sometimes remark to a neighbour that she wanted to die.

Perhaps this want came because kind Mr. Meek was always reminding her that she was no use to him. The neighbour, who knew what a good church-goer Mr. Meek was, advised Sarah to be patient, for, no doubt, Mr. Meek went to church to pray for her recovery.

" 'E do want I to get well", Mrs. Meek replied, "only to skin they moles".

One can well imagine that illness at home, though it had its inconveniences, could never be allowed, by so good a man as Mr. Meek, to interrupt his daily toil; for Mr. Meek was known far and wide as the best mole-catcher in the county.

He had his customers, and many a fine lady in the county wore a coat made from the skins of his moles that Mrs. Meek, who was more clever than he was at this task, used to skin for him before she was taken ill.

Mr. Meek was always in the fields, unless the day was Sunday, either setting his traps or taking them up again. The traps he used were of various kinds, and included the old-fashioned rude snare that consisted of a bent stick with wire fastened to the end, that sometimes, though not always, caught the mole alive.

Mr. Meek allowed no vice, such as beer-drinking or tobacco-smoking, to interrupt or to interfere with his labours. He never drank anything but tea, and he used to tell the ladies he sold his moles to, that he never burnt money in his mouth.

Farmer Told was as glad when he saw Mr. Meek in his meadows as when he saw a black rook settle upon the back of one of his sheep to peck out the maggots. Mr. Told wasn't one of those who believe that anything that moves up the soil and makes heaps of it, such as the moles or the worms, could in any way be of use to the land; and so, when he saw Mr. Meek, he would always point him out as a good man who was so clever at destroying the many creatures that hurt the poor farmer. Mr. Told would even go so far as to praise Mr. Meek to the drinkers who visited the inn.

"A mole," Mr. Told would say, "be an animal that Meek do know about".

"Some folk," Mr. Told would continue, "do fancy that a mole be as foolish as a maiden, and do walk into a trap to please 'isself".

Mr. Told would finish his glass, and, after looking round at the company as an important person does who wants to draw all attention to himself, he said impressively: "Meek do love they creatures and do watch them".

In order to show a little more exactly how Mr. Meek loved them, Mr. Told moved his empty glass along the bar table.

"Glass be a mole," said Mr. Told. Everyone looked at the glass that had been so unexpectedly transformed.

"A mole do move so," and Mr. Told moved his glass and pointed to it with the heavy pipe that he held in his other hand.

"Thik be a travelling mole," said Mr. Told, moving the glass slowly, "and any woon of thee who don't know nothing would set the trap there". Mr. Told pointed with his pipe to a part of the table to which he was moving his glass.

Suddenly he turned the glass to one side and brought his pipe down upon it with a crash. "But 'tis there Meek do 'ave 'im," he shouted.

It sometimes happened that Mr. Hayball, clothed in his long black cassock, would walk up the church path with Mr. Meek who always arrived early on Sundays. Upon one of these occasions when Mr. Meek, together with the walking-stick, accompanied the clergyman, Mr. Hayball chanced to notice that Mr. Meek was looking very intently at the grass by the path side. Mr. Hayball looked too and noticed that the grass moved. At the same moment, Mr. Meek made an odd sound in his throat like an old dog who means to spring.

Mr. Hayball noticed the sound and said amiably: "You know you have my permission, Mr. Meek, to trap the moles here".

Mr. Meek looked aside, his walking-stick tapped the church path, he hadn't meant to do anything so wicked as to look at a mole on the Sabbath day.

Mr. Meek lived so good a life, so devout and so well ordered, that had it not been for his son Jimmy, no short story reader, if we except the angels, would ever have heard of him.

But, with Jimmy always watching his father, things can be told.

Curiously enough, Mr. Meek wasn't the sort of gentleman who liked to be watched, and, whenever Jimmy followed him into the meadows to see how many moles he caught, Mr. Meek was obliged to remind his son by a pretty sharp box upon the ear, that had more than once laid Jimmy flat, that the proper place for a little boy to play was in the village lane.

The fact that his father didn't wish to be watched, except in church where both he and his walking-stick behaved exceptionally well, made Jimmy all the more eager to see what he did, and so he would follow him discreetly, though behind some thick hedge, whenever he could.

One afternoon Jimmy followed his father in this cautious manner, and saw him take six moles from the older kind of snares that didn't always kill them. There were three dead ones, and these Mr. Meek put into a bag that he carried, while three that Jimmy saw were still living, his father put carefully in the inner pocket of his coat.

Jimmy hadn't watched his father for nothing. He was glad he had come, and now, of course, he wished to learn what Mr. Meek was going to do with the live moles that he had hidden so carefully.

That evening the full moon made all Dodder as bright as day. Mr. Meek ate his tea without speaking, and, when he had finished, he nodded to his walking-stick and rose from the table. Mr. Meek went out into the lane and Jimmy followed his father at a very safe distance. Jimmy crept along in the shadow of the hedge.

Mr. Meek took the way to the church. But, instead of going in at the gate, he passed round by the churchyard until he came to where he knew no one could see him from the lane, and then he climbed over the wall. Jimmy followed too, and, coming to a tree that hid him, he peeped at his father and saw what he did.

Mr. Meek, who evidently believed himself to be entirely alone, for a churchyard at night isn't often visited, began to speak aloud in a jocose manner, as he sometimes used to do at home when he heard his wife groaning.

"A woman," said Mr. Meek, "who don't skin no moles baint no good to I, and so 'tis best for we all that she be made well; a churchyard mole that be baked alive be the cure—an' a baked mole be good meat".

" 'Twas a pity," continued Mr. Meek, "that thik mole Parson did see did burrow so deep in ground that I lost en".

Jimmy watched. His father now sat down upon a flat tombstone in the same cautious manner as he used to sit in his church pew. He took three live moles out of his pocket and allowed them to run about the stone.

"Poor animals," said kind Mr. Meek with a chuckle, "they don't know where they be to, but I baint going to bake none of 'ee now, for thee baint fat enough for table''. Mr. Meek let the moles burrow into the soft grass.

''Clergyman do say,'' remarked Mr. Meek pleasantly, looking at the mounds around him, ''that most of these that do bide here will be baked alive too, as a cure for their wicked ways, but Meek be different''. Mr. Meek smiled. '' 'Tis true,'' he said, ''that worms be plentiful, an' as they do live so well 'tis most like they be slow crawlers, an' a churchyard mole be the woon to grow fat; in a month's time I will have 'em''. Mr. Meek rose from the stone as if he were about to sing a hymn. Jimmy ran home . . . . .

During the next four weeks, Jimmy played in the lanes, but sometimes, when no one was in the kitchen, he would open the oven door and peep in.

Mrs. Meek grew worse than ever.

Every Sunday, according to his custom, Mr. Meek would go to church, and as he walked up the path carrying his walking-stick, he would look at the green grass on either side of the path.

The Sunday before the moon was full Mr. Hayball took his text from the third chapter of Daniel and described how awful the burning fiery furnace must have been into which Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were thrown. When Mr. Hayball mentioned the furnace, Jimmy, who blew the organ, happened to look at his father and saw that he was smiling.

On the Monday Jimmy noticed that, though the evening was mild for November, his father had heaped coals upon the fire, so that the oven would certainly be hot enough to cure any Shadrach of his faith had he been thrown into it. After he had put on the coals, Mr. Meek went out into the lane and Jimmy followed.

In the churchyard and near to the flat stone, Mr. Meek found a fat mole caught alive in one of his snares. Jimmy ran home, and his father, when he came, saw his son looking into the fire.

Mr. Meek placed the mole upon the table and admired it.

'' 'Tis a pity,'' he said, '' to spoil 'is coat, but what be the use of a woman who do only stay and groan, and don't skin no moles''.

As if in answer to Mr. Meek, a groan that sounded like her last came from Mrs. Meek, who lay upstairs.

Mr. Meek told Jimmy to look to the mole and went to his wife. That groan had been her last. Mr. Meek returned to the kitchen and looked at the fat mole that Jimmy was playing with.

"Mole do fancy," said Mr. Meek smiling, "that now Sarah be dead, I be going to be kind and let the cat 'ave 'im".

Jimmy pointed to the oven.

Mr. Meek smiled.

T. F. Powys.

ROSANOV

A Critical and Biographical Account *

VASILI VASILIEVICH ROSANOV was born on April 20, 1856, in the town of Vetluga, in the Kostroma province. The Rosanov family moved to Kostroma, when Vasili was three years old, and there he spent his early childhood. His father died when Vasili was about five. The mother, who had to work hard, had no time to take proper care of the children, and young Vasili grew up in an atmosphere of poverty and discontent. The pension of 300 roubles which his mother used to receive was not enough to keep a large family. And the family had no good influence on young Vasili. He grew up a lonely boy, and found no support in anyone; soon there developed in him a sense of weakness, helplessness, estrangement. Love and tenderness were neither near him, nor in him.

In *Solitaria,* Rosanov says: "When my mother died, I merely realized that I could now smoke a cigarette openly. And I lighted one". And further: "throughout our house I can't remember any one ever smiling".

The hard work in the kitchen garden in which young Rosanov had to take part was to him intolerable, for he was forced to work without any word of encouragement or affection. His elder brothers did not like him and did not help him in his work.

In one of his letters to me (of August 26, 1918), Rosanov describes his childhood as follows:—

> "The very last stage of poverty arrived when we lost our cow. Up till then we drank milk and were contented. The

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* *A translation of G. Gollerbach's, "The Life and Works of V. V. Rosanov", 1922, Petersburg, very considerably abridged.*

> garden was a large one, and the work in it for a boy of seven was very arduous. . . . Altogether, life, physically, was terribly difficult, 'hard-working', and this at a time when I was beginning to go to school''.
>
> ''I worked along with Voskressensky, who took an interest in our house, and was a sort of step-father; and he compelled me to work. He was a nihilist, a 'seminarist', a 'populist' and a 'Basarovist' [from Turgenev's *Fathers and Children*]. My mother, innocent and fine, got to love him with an old, impotent, unhappy love. He had completed his studies at the Seminary, he was a painter, not at all a bad one, and also studied at the Academy of Art in St. Petersburg. Perhaps he was not at all a bad man, but his badness consisted in this: that we all hated him too much. He used to flog me for smoking, but could not stop me.
>
> ''And then our cow died. She resembled my mother, and also came as it were 'of the Shishkin family'. Not a strong cow, yet she gave us milk. Then something happened to her. The butcher was called in. I was looking on from the hayrick. He tied the cow's horns to the cart . . . then put the knife to her throat: the cow fell down, and I too at that moment fell down from the hayrick. . . .
>
> ''I used to carry milk to the neighbours to sell it; also raspberries, gooseberries, and cucumbers. All was well as long as the cow lived''. . . .
>
> ''One of my childhood's traits was my absorption in imagination. It was not fantasy, but dreaming. It seems to me that such a 'thoughtful boy' as myself never existed. I 'thought eternally', but what of, I do not know. Yet the dreams were neither silly, nor empty''.

Rosanov entered the public school at Simbirsk. In his third form he read most carefully Buckle's *History of Civilization,* as well as Karl Fogt and Pisarev, and he used to make notes of the books he had read. His enthusiasm for materialism made him quarrel with his eldest brother, who used to laugh at Buckle and Pisarev. Yet Rosanov's infatuation for materialism did not last long. In his sixth form, at the Novgorod public school, he no longer could stand Pisarev's writings.

The university played no important part in Rosanov's life. ''Formal,'' ''academic'' instruction could not satisfy him. ''It is not the universities,'' he says in *Fallen Leaves, Vol. I,* ''that have brought up the genuine Russian, but the good, old, illiterate nurses''.

The Russian public schools and universities Rosanov regarded as ''nihilism, negation, and a jibe at Russia''.

> "How nice it is," [he says in *Fallen Leaves, Vol. I*], "that I slept through my university course. At the lectures I used to pick my nose, and at the exams I answered from cribs. What university man does not know that our 'Russian Imperial Universities' were in olden times a kind of foundling home, and in our time have become a factory for manufacturing diplomas, a department for hall-marking mediocrities?"

Rosanov considered that the autonomy of the universities did not at all signify the freedom of teaching and the independence of the professorial corporation, a corporation which had neither a *credo*, nor an *amo*; but just signified the autonomy of the students, which was the *causa materialis* and *causa finalis* of that institution.

"Of what do those men think," Rosanov said indignantly in a private conversation about Russian professors. "The fellow has been sitting for twenty-five years, like a log, in his chair, and repeating what he had once fished out from German text books. And you never see one taking a pen in his hand and writing something of his own". . . .

Yet Rosanov completed his studies at the Moscow University, in the faculty of history and philology, and became a teacher of history and geography. But teaching was not his vocation, and he did not feel fit for the part. In one of his notes to Strakhov's letters (*Literary Exiles, Vol. I*) Rosanov says :—

> "I never could control my attention (hence naturally I was an impossible teacher); on the contrary, a mysterious attention, with its autonomous laws, either completely unknown, or not revealed to me, controlled myself. And not a single intention in my life was fulfilled by me; but I did fulfil and perform with fervour, with passion just what I did not want or suppose, or what I almost did not desire or desired very little. I must remark that 'doing everything with passion', I, mysteriously, did it also coldly; and nothing could prevent me from 'passionately participating, say, in a patriotic procession' and passing immediately (under a momentary influence) into participation in a cosmopolitan procession".

Only an extreme individualist could have made the following admission (in the same note to Strakhov's 88th letter) :—

> "a 'sympathetic face' could drag me into the Revolution, as it could drag me to the Church; and I, strictly speaking, always went to people and after people, but not to a 'system' and not after a system of convictions. For instance, all my polemics (bitter and lasting many years) against Vengerov and Kareyev arose from this that they both were fat, and I simply

> can't stand fat writers. But their 'labours' were not at all unpleasant to me (or were 'all the same' to me)".

In another passage (in *Fallen Leaves, Vol. II*) Rosanov says again of Vengerov :—

> "His labours are to be respected. And the fact that he has been working all his life on Pushkin is even touching. In personal contact (once) he produced on me an almost pleasant impression. But I have only to glance at his belly and I am already writing (in my mind) a fiery article". And further : "Why don't I like Vengerov? It is strange to say, but simply because he is so fat and black (like a big-bellied beetle)".

Rosanov's subjection to a "mysterious attention" was all through his life "a very painful peculiarity" of his. That "mysterious attention", directed as it were to something deep down in himself, to something eternally listening, is a typical characteristic of mystically-attuned, dreamy, self-probing natures.

Rosanov thought that this "peculiarity" of his practically shattered his whole life : "I could never say to myself", he declared, " 'you must listen', and actually did so ; 'you must do something', and—did it. Strange as it is, yet for forty years I have lived 'by chance', 'from moment to moment'; it has been a forty-year-old chain of accidental and unexpected things ; I married 'by chance', I fell in love 'by chance', I got into the conservative movement in literature 'by chance'; some one (the Merezhkovskies) came and took me into the very advanced *Mir Iskusstva* and *Novy Pout,* where I collaborated 'by chance' (i.e., in the chain of facts of my inner life, 'I did not foresee it even yesterday', 'I did not look for it to-day')."

In 1886 appeared Rosanov's book *On Understanding,* the result of five years' labour. That book, according to Rosanov, was a polemic of 737 pages directed against the Moscow University.

The book was ignored and unappreciated. The author received from the bookseller a sack of unsold copies (the edition consisted of 600 copies), and a second sackful Rosanov sold at the Sukharev market for 15 roubles for wrapping up novels.

After the publication of *On Understanding*, Rosanov had meant to write *On Potentiality and its Rôle in the Physical World and the World of Man*—a book which was not destined to be written. This is what he wrote in a note to *Literary Exiles* :—

> "Potentialities are invisible, half-existing, quarter-existing, co-existing forms (substances) round the visible (real). The

> world 'as it is' is only a particle and moment of the 'potential world', which world is the proper object of a complete philosophy and a complete science. The study of the transitions from the potential into the real world, the laws of the transition and the conditions of the transition, generally, of all that emerges in the stage of transition, filled my thought and imagination.
>
> And, in a word, it seemed to me that my philosophy would embrace the angels and trade".

Rosanov's work as teacher in provincial public schools was uncongenial to him. The relations between him and his pupils were not bad, but apart from the "lovely faces and dear souls" of the pupils, everything in his teaching disgusted him, was strange, and annoying beyond measure.

> "Teaching," he wrote, "is form, and I am formless. In teaching there must be order and a system, and I am systemless and even disorderly. There is duty, and to me any duty at the bottom of my heart always seemed comical, and on any duty at the bottom of my heart I always wanted to play a trick (except tragic duty). . ."
>
> "Every hour, and on every turn the 'teacher' denied me, and I denied the teacher. There was a mutual destruction of the 'work and the worker'. Something hellish. It seemed to me that I could collect all the pupils and fly away with them into the regions of philosophy, fairy tales, stories, adventures 'in forests and at night time', to the angels and the devils, and above all into dreaming. But at nine in the morning I stand at prayers, take the class register; listen to the rivers which fall into the Volga, then to the system of the great lakes in North America, the States and their cities, Boston, Texas, Salt Lake, the number of pigs in Chicago; the steel industry in Sheffield; then kings, tsars, popes, generals, peace treaties, 'on which river this battle took place', 'from which hill that general looked', 'what Napoleon said when he stood by the pyramids', and finally . . . the director is looking from the door to see how I conduct my lesson."

Rosanov spent thirteen years teaching in provincial public schools. And during that period he wrote his *Twilight of Enlightenment, The Legend of the Grand Inquisitor, The Æsthetic Conception of History, The Place of Christianity in History,* and a series of small articles. As years went by he was more and more drawn to problems of religion and Christian mysticism, to the revelation of the invisible things. A real longing for religion seized him at the time when it became clear to him, as he says in his note to Strakhov's 55th letter, that

Sunt destinationes rerum,
Sunt metae rerum.
Primae sunt divinae,
Secundae sunt humanae;

and when he suddenly distinguished the divine world in nature from the accidental-arbitrary-human world. According to Rosanov, this happened at that truly sacred hour, the hour "when having suddenly stopped making my cigarettes, I fixed my glance on the distance, and in my mind the *destinationes* and *metae* separated and showed the gulf that existed between them. From that moment until to-day (until the age of 57), my conception of the world was being unfolded: I boundlessly gave myself to the *destinationes* . . . and looked with hostility at the *metae*. . . . For two years I have been happy with 'that hour', for two years I have been 'in Easter', 'in the pealing of bells', truly 'arrayed in white vestments', for I saw the *destinationes,* eternal, ascending from the earth to heaven, and as plants the tops of which were held by God, the Holder of All. Hence, as I can remember, came my solemn style; for he to whom the *destinationes* have been revealed has no right to speak in the ordinary language of the market place, but only in the language of the temple, for he is a priest, appointed not by men, but chosen by God: i.e., it is to him alone that the divine will (the *destinationes* in the world) has revealed itself. . . . I remember perfectly well and distinctly that from that moment I became religious, definitely and motivatedly religious, whilst up to that moment I had only 'played about with atheism, public-school atheism', not knowing what to do with it, and above all how to get rid of it. 'How to get rid' was solved in that hour".

The state thus described bears all the character of a mystical experience, with its typical features: intuition, ecstasy, momentariness and almost inarticulateness. To a religious nature there is no more important experience than a mystical one. In the life of the greatest mystics there were experiences identical with the one described by Rosanov. . . .

Owing to Strakhov's efforts Rosanov, who for years had longed to live and work in Petersburg, was finally appointed to a post in the State Control Office in Petersburg, and accordingly moved there in 1893, when after years of correspondence the two men at last met. In his note to Strakhov's letter of May 15th, 1893, Rosanov says: "After all it must be that I am more sympathetic in person than I am in my writings. . . . Now, with my arrival in Petersburg, Strakhov adopted a much warmer attitude towards me. Hence this reminder for my critics: 'not everything in Rosanov is as bad as it seems in his writings'. After all, man is better and more genuine than his 'books'!"

At that time a circle of writers was formed in Petersburg to which belonged N. P. Aksakov, I. F. Romanov (Rzy), S. F. Sharapov, and A. Vassiliev. Strakhov, too, eventually joined that circle of "living Slavophiles"; for, after the death of N. Y. Danilevsky and K. N. Leontiev, Strakhov remained the sole representative of pure Slavophilism. In 1894, Rosanov brought out, at his own expense, his *Legend of the Grand Inquisitor,* which, owing to his poor circumstances—his salary being one hundred roubles a month—was a severe strain on his resources. Those difficult circumstances were reflected in his work and mood of that time.

In his letter of July, 1894, Strakhov reproves Rosanov for his "hurried articles". In a note to that letter Rosanov says: "All those hurried articles are to be explained by my extreme material want, the like of which I never before experienced in my life, and I look back now at the years 1893-1899 with horror (I started work in the *Novoye Vremya* in 1899, having left my post in the Control). Our soul is in the clutches of life; in the clutches of a flat, of dinner, in the clutches of debts to the butcher and greengrocer". . . .

Rosanov regarded Strakhov with love and respect. "The secret of Strakhov," he says, "was in his wise life and in the wisdom of his way of thinking." Strakhov had a very high opinion of Rosanov's brilliant talent, but feared that he was unstable and ill-balanced.

On his photograph, presented by Strakhov to Rosanov, we read: "I love your talent very much, Vasili Vasilievich, but I am afraid that nothing will come of it". (October, 1895).

To this time also belongs Rosanov's friendship with the young writer, the student F. E. Shperk, whom he considered more gifted, more original than himself, (see *Solitaria*). Shperk died from tuberculosis at the age of 26, and as a writer is quite unknown. Evidently, under Rosanov's influence, Shperk became a Slavophile and then embraced Orthodoxy. "I loved him madly", says Rosanov in *Fallen Leaves, Vol. II.*

Towards the end of the 'nineties Rosanov began to work for the *Novoye Vremya.* The invitation to write for that paper he had received as long ago as 1893, but somehow paid no attention to it. In his note to Souvorin's letter of August 17th, 1893, he says: "Only now, reading the letter in proof, have I noticed the definite suggestion contained there to write for the paper, of which I, inexplicably to myself, never availed myself till 1899; i.e., for six whole years I overlooked this suggestion; and yet those six years were positively poisoned by material want (as was also my literary activity). If I could have thought of writing 'notices' for the paper, I should have been saved; but at that time I could not write 'notices', only 'treatises'." Of one of such "treatises" Souvorin in his letter of August 12th, 1898, writes to Rosanov: "It is either a sermon from the pulpit, or a profound philosophy, which requires commentaries. Do agree, that if Burenin and myself cannot make it out, the great mass of our readers are sure not to understand it either".

All his life long Rosanov regarded Souvorin with deep respect, valuing in him his "rare modesty and nobility". As an illustration, he relates the following fact: —

After Mikhailovsky's* death, Rosanov wrote a very cordial article on him on the ground of "de mortuis, etc.", although he had for years carried on a most severe polemic against him. Souvorin passed that article, although under some pretext he might have suppressed it.

In the beginning of his infatuation for Egypt, Rosanov wrote in the *Novoye Vremya* under the pseudonym of Ibis. The articles were varied in their themes and rich in their contents; but Souvorin had at times to protest against certain passages or too outspoken expressions.

When Rosanov's book *In the World of the Indefinite and the Unsolved* was published, E. L. Radlov drew the attention of D. Kobeko to some of the concluding pages of the book. Kobeko was in a fury and told Witte of it. Witte, who was Minister of Finance at that time, forwarded the book to K. P. Pobedonoszev, the Procurator of the Holy Synod, drawing his attention to the last three pages of the book. Pobedonoszev sent the book to the

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* *Mikhailovsky, an advanced socialist and influential literary critic.*

Chief of the Press Department. Both Witte and Stolypin considered Rosanov "a terrible pornographic writer". As a result the book was suppressed a month after its publication.

> "Yet," writes Rosanov in his note to Souvorin's 31st letter, "the religion of 'the opening bud' is the complete denial—a denial to the very root, and to the end of time—of pornography, a complete denial of the bourgeois and low, salacious and hooliganish attitude towards sex, towards sexual organs, towards sexual acts. It is sex 'transfigured', where the objects and names are the same as in pornography, but at the same time they are perfectly different, regarded under a different aspect, in a different spirit. They are as much related to one another as a Petersburg brothel and, say, the Bible story of Ruth and Boaz. To Russians this can be explained by saying that in certain moments one and the same thing is done by Artsybashev's Sanin and by Pushkin's Tatyana—but what a difference there is in what is done! The same thing is done in marriage and in a 'gay house', but again, what a difference! Society, the public, the critics, finally the official censorship cannot and do not wish to distinguish that difference, and they accuse me of talking of a 'brothel' when I am speaking of the Egyptian 'bud' (marriage)."

In 1902, two books of Rosanov's, mostly consisting of his published articles, and entitled *Nature and History* and *Religion and Culture* were published. A year later appeared his two volumes on *The Family Question in Russia.* In 1909, he brought out *The Russian Church,* along with *When the Officials Retired* and *Italian Impressions.*

In 1911 appeared the first part of his *Metaphysics of Christianity,* entitled *The Dark Image,* and later its continuation, entitled *Men of the Moonlight.*

In 1912, *Solitaria* was published; *Fallen Leaves, Part I,* made its appearance in 1913, and *Fallen Leaves, Part II,* in 1915.

The three last-named books furnish abundant material for making an acquaintance with the personality of their author. In concise fragments and notes Rosanov fixes separate outstanding moments of his life and of the life of his intimates. *Solitaria* and *Fallen Leaves* are permeated by that "spirit of trifles, charming and light" which better than any solemn chronicle reflects the soul of the author and of the epoch. To careless and inattentive readers these books will yield very little, or perhaps nothing. But he who would be guided by the penetrating principle of the mystics — *ab exterioribus ad interiora,* will soon see that

Rosanov is one of those few writers in whom the "continual *fiens*" is for ever and always overcome by the "eternal *ens*".

In trying to understand Rosanov on the principle of *ab exterioribus ad interiora* we soon realize that it needed the true penetration of genius, the clairvoyance of genius to see in the thousand trifling, everyday occurrences, which nearly everyone passes by with utter indifference, to see in these the imprint of the "other world", to find their profound significance, to divine their fleeting value. We soon realize that the author of these as it were incoherent and absurd notes written now while "examining his coins", now "on the back of the lined sheet", now "in the street", now "on the heel of my slipper (while bathing)", now even "in the W.C."—that the author is a unique observer and thinker in the full and perfect sense of the word. In *Solitaria* we read :—

> "I am choked in thought. And how pleasant to me to live in that choked state. That is why my life, despite its thorns and tears, is, after all, a joy". He has no desire for fame, or popularity : "I longed for nothing so much as for *humiliation*. 'Fame' at times gladdened me—with a purely piggish pleasure. But this never lasted long (a day or two); then would come the former longing—to be humiliated".

But neither has he got that assumed modesty, in which there is more hypocrisy than virtue : he knows his worth quite well :—

> "I may be a 'fool' (there are rumours); perhaps even a 'swindler' (there is gossip to that effect); but the width of thought, the incommensurability of horizons revealed—no one has had that before me in the way I possess it. And all of it came from my own mind, without borrowing an iota even. I am simply a wonderful man".

People accuse Rosanov of inconstancy, perfidiousness, even of lying, and this is what he says about it :—

> "It is surprising how I managed to accommodate myself to *falsehood*. It has never worried me. And for this odd reason : 'what business is it of yours what precisely I think? Why am I *obliged* to tell you my real thoughts?' My profound subjectivity (the pathos of subjectivity) has had this effect that I have gone through my whole life as though behind a curtain, irremovable, untearable. 'Nobody dare touch that curtain'. There I lived, there *with myself* I was truthful. . ."

And from this most profound subjectivity springs Rosanov's attitude to morals : "I am not such a scoundrel yet as to think about morals". But, completely ignoring the conventional notion of morality, Rosanov is drawn with his whole being to religious problems. To him they present the only interest, profound and acute :—

> "Do you know," he asks, "that religion is the most important, the most essential, the most needful? With the person who does not know this, not the alpha of discussion or conversation should be entertained. Such a person should simply be ignored. Passed over in silence. Yet who does know it? Are there many who do? That is why in our time there is almost *nothing* to speak about, nor *anyone* to speak with".

Positivism, and everything connected with positivism, was revolting to Rosanov.

The puzzle of Rosanov's attraction to the subject of sexual life is solved in the following words :—

> "The connexion of sex with God—greater than the connexion of the mind with God, greater even than the connexion of conscience with God—is gathered from this that all a-sexualists reveal themselves also as a-theists. Those gentlemen, as Buckle or Spencer, as Pisarev or Belinsky, who have said about 'sex' no more words than about the Argentine Republic, are at the same time astonishingly atheistical, as though there had not been before them or near them any religion".

After the publication of *Fallen Leaves* the critics began more and more to accuse Rosanov of "pornography". But those accusations came from people to whom sexual life and the cult of sex appeared nasty and evil. To Rosanov, on the contrary, sexual life breathes of the fragrance of religion, and shines as brightly as the sun. His accusers should be reminded of the words of the Apostle : "There is nothing unclean of itself : but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean", and also : "Unto the pure all things are pure : but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled".

The indifference to morality characteristic of Rosanov does not mean indifference to truth. And to Rosanov, a thorough Russian, with all the great qualities and great defects which are peculiar to the Russian spirit, to him truth is above everything : "Truth is higher than the sun, higher than the heaven, higher than God : for if *God* too began *not* with truth, then he is not God, and the heaven is a swamp, and the sun a brass plate".

No one would accuse Rosanov of banality, but he is often accused of cynicism. But this is almost praise, for cynicism and banality are essentially opposing categories: mediocre natures are incapable of cynicism, but can be utterly banal. Cynicism, I should say, grows up on a soil of spiritual abundance. It is a morbid reaction to the monstrosities and grimaces of life. . . A morbid reaction, yet needing courage and wit. Short-sighted observers often confuse cynicism with banality. Banality can be compared to a dead nettle or a thistle or a weed—common, to be found everywhere and very ordinary. Cynicism may be compared to a cactus, the strange form of which, in spite of its ugliness, is fascinating. "Cynicism through suffering? . . . . Did it ever occur to you?" Rosanov asks in *Solitaria,* and the fact that this question is still unanswered shows that no one had thought of propounding it previous to the writing of *Solitaria.* In *Fallen Leaves, Vol. II,* we read :—

> "There are people who are born 'rightly' and others who are born not 'rightly'. I was born not 'rightly'—hence such a strange, prickly 'biography', and yet rather 'interesting'. And feeling that lack of 'rightness', a writer knows that only 'disturbance' comes from him". . . . "I could fill the world with crimson clouds of smoke. . . But I don't want to do it".

About his critics (whose names are legion now) Rosanov says :—

> "They have no divination of me at all. They either make me out a 'Byron' soaring up, or a 'Satan', black and in flames. But there is nothing like this in me : I am quite a nice fellow. What a lot of black beetles have I dragged out from my bath, so as not to drown a single one of them, when turning on the water. Choukovsky was the only one who guessed, or rather was able to name, the 'composition of my bones', my nature, blood, temperament. Some of his definitions are astonishing. My themes?—they are visible to everyone, and indeed they don't matter a damn. 'There are all sorts of themes', I shall say cynically this time. But he has not guessed my intimate secret—which is pain, pain without cause, indefinite and ceaseless. It seems to me that this is my most striking—at any rate, inexplicable characteristic. It seems to me that I was born with pain". . . (*Fallen Leaves, Vol. II*) . . . "I am not needed; of nothing am I more convinced than of this that I am not needed. (*Solitaria*)".

Without declaring himself the possessor of lofty truths, Rosanov confesses : "I do not want truth, I want peace". Not only is he not attracted by abstract truth, but even to its themes he is indifferent :—

> "I fled round themes, but did not fly towards themes. The very flight—that is my life. As to themes—they are just like a dream. One, two, many . . . but I have forgotten them all. I shall forget them towards the grave. In the other world I shall be without themes. And God will ask me · 'What have you done?' 'Nothing,' will be my reply."

That "nothing" must be taken as Rosanov's disgust with all that is dogmatic, planned, and systematic. . . . Rosanov's creation represents something chaotic. A systematic approach to that creation is almost impossible, so scattered, so dispersed are his works. Often the basic idea is hidden under a heap of fragmentary sketches and notes. Rosanov's philosophy is a confused piling up of hasty ideas. But in it there is none of the pernicious pedantry, and dogmatic deadliness, which is characteristic of most philosophical works. His living thought, multifaced, multicoloured, multitoned pulsates in every line of Rosanov's. In his thought there may be morbidity, perversity, a great deal of the spirit of Dostoevsky; its lapses are serious and its flights high. The "Dostoevsky" element in Rosanov is so strong that at one time the critics were inclined to regard Rosanov as the "shadow" of Dostoevsky, even as his imitator. But, in fact, Rosanov was incapable of imitation. And to Dostoevsky he was bound by a basic spiritual kinship.

Many times in the press and in talks with friends Rosanov spoke of his close, intimate, psychological bond with Dostoevsky's creations. Once I remember he said to me, as he stroked a volume of *The Journal of an Author*: "Learn to value this book. I never part with it". Dostoevsky was always on his table.

Declaring that writers who stand alone and belong to no parties or groups might indeed hail our progress with the words *Morituri te salutamus,* Rosanov maintained that if the millions of reading Russians were to read, with the same attention, ardour, and passion—to read carefully and to reflect on every page of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, as they now read and reflect on every page of Gorky and Andreyev, then our public would grow into a tremendously serious entity; for even without any school instruction, merely reflecting on the whole of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, would make one a Socrates or an Epictetus. His personal impression of the creations of these two titans of Russian literature Rosanov formulated thus: "Tolstoy surprises;

Dostoevsky moves''. Tolstoy's works he compared to a perfectly-planned building. Of Dostoevsky he said that he was "a rider in the desert with one quiver of arrows. And blood flows wherever his arrow strikes''.

Rosanov disliked Tolstoy's tendency to preach, to teach. There was nothing in Tolstoy which was dear to him; but Dostoevsky ever lived within him; Dostoevsky's music ever played in his soul. Knowing his feeling for Dostoevsky, I once asked him: "Who of Dostoevsky's heroes is most dear to you, whose psychology is nearer and more akin to yours?" Without hesitating a moment, Rosanov answered, with his peculiar impulsive and soft intonation: "Shatov, of course''.

There is no doubt that with all his much-talked-of "anti-Christianity" Rosanov loved Christ with that living, passionate, boundlessly devoted love with which one can love only a unique, incomparable being. In Rosanov's opinion it is no matter that Christianity has turned the world into ashes, has dried up the flowers of joy, that Golgotha has dimmed the sun-lit vistas of the universe: for it is just because Jesus the Sweetest was so inexpressibly sweet that life has become so flavourless. Here is Rosanov's secret thought, here is his consolation. Yes, he loved "the green voices of the spring" and the "gummy buds"; yes, he adored the fruitful womb (by the way, he loved Dostoevsky just because, as he put it, Dostoevsky is "a pregnant, big-loined writer"). Rosanov grieved that Christ never laughed, never smiled, never took a lyre or reed into his hand; that there are no music or songs in Christianity; that the life of the flesh is driven out from the cycle of evangelical joys. But in his withdrawal from Christ, in his denial, he delicately felt the personal fascination of Christ and closely approached the most intimate traits of Christ's personality. To the "non-accepting" Rosanov Christ was as essential, needed, and personal, as he was to the "accepting" Dostoevsky.

Rosanov and Dostoevsky approached Christ from different, but equally close, angles. A certain hint of that intimacy, the psychological likeness of that intimacy, is contained in the mystical love which some people feel for one another, sometimes quite hopelessly, but always boundlessly and irresistibly. Such a love exists in Shatov's relations to Stavrogin, with such a love Aliosha Karamazov loved his father. But these are only allusive images of what Rosanov and Dostoevsky contained in the subtlest complication of their souls.

The complication and tangle of Rosanov's religious position consisted in this that, most intimately and mystically loving Christ, he did not accept Him with his mind. But there is no doubt that the spiritual bond between Dostoevsky and Rosanov consisted in just that "contract" with Christ. The difference being that in Dostoevsky's religious probings the "contract" was manifested in a *positive* form, while in Rosanov's penetrating anti-christianity it found expression in a *negative* form.

However you may regard Rosanov's views, you can't help being charmed by his style, a style not exempt from grammatical errors and inexactitudes, yet remarkably vigorous and direct, colourful and picturesque. After Pushkin and Turgenev, who seemed to have created the final expressiveness of the Russian language, Rosanov has revealed in it new beauties, has made it a quite different language, and this without any effort, without any care for style. *Solitaria* and *Fallen Leaves* are the summits of Rosanov's stylistic mastery. . . . "The best in me," wrote Rosanov in his letter to me of July 16th, 1915, "is *Solitaria*". In another letter, in the autumn of 1918, not long before his death, he dwells on his style, on the meaning and significance of his *Fallen Leaves*. . . .

> "Mysteriously and beautifully, mysteriously and egotistically I gave in *Fallen Leaves* the whole of myself. Indeed, *The Apocalypse of Our Times* is also *Fallen Leaves*—only on one definite subject—on the rebellion against Christianity; and so are also my *Oriental Motifs,* which disclose the secret of the ancient religions. . . . And I have simply lost any other form of literary work: 'I can't do it', 'there's nothing doing'. And yet this is the simplest and only form. Anything simpler cannot be invented. 'The form of Adam'—in paradise, and since paradise. Since paradise there has only been added the chair, on which the writer sits down and begins to write. Indeed, what else are poets doing than writing 'fallen leaves'. And you, writing of Rosanov, indeed do not at all write of him, but you write your own fallen leaves: what 'I think', 'feel', 'live', 'do'. This form is both full of egoism and yet without egoism. Essentially, everything is man's concern, and nothing is his concern. Essentially, occupied with himself alone, he is occupied at the same time with the whole world. I remember quite well, from my childhood, that I had no concern with anything. And yet this mysteriously and fully

merged with 'everything is my concern'. Now through this peculiar fusion of egoism and non-egoism *Fallen Leaves* is particularly fine".

"I do not remember who it was, Gershenson or V. Ivanov, who wrote to me that 'people thought that the forms of literary work had already been exhausted', 'that the drama, poem, and lyric were exhausted' and nothing could be found, invented, discovered there, and that to the existing forms I had added the '11th' or '12th' form. Gershenson also said that it was quite classical in its simplicity, artlessness. This delighted me, for he is an expert. And along with this, what happened? Not a single Pharaoh, not a single Napoleon immortalized himself like that. In a pyramid there is a void which is not filled; Napoleon had days of non-existence. Yet *Fallen Leaves* will appeal to a small man, to a small life. This for the small as well as for the great soul is, as it were, the achievement of the boundary of eternity. And it simply consists in this that 'the river should flow as it does'; that 'everything should be as it is'. Without inventions. Yet 'man is always inventing'. And here is that peculiarity that even the inventions do not violate the truth, the facts: every dream, wish, cobweb of thought has its place here. It is by no means a 'Journal', or 'Memoirs', or a penitent confession—it is just only 'leaves', 'fallen', 'it was' and 'is no longer', it lived and 'ceased to live', it is less than a pyramid and more than a pyramid; above all, it is more complex, and at the same time 'you can put it in your pocket'. And when I think that I have done this on my own, have done it since 1911, then certainly not a single man will to such an extent and in such a way *express* himself, in such a way and yet *subjectively*. And it seems to me that it is God who has granted me this as a reward for my whole labour and sweat and truth".

The continuation of *Fallen Leaves* is *The Apocalypse of Our Times,* published in 1918 in Sergiev Posad. With *The Apocalypse,* and his unfinished work *Oriental Motifs* Rosanov's creative work was concluded. To Rosanov the destiny of his books, that is, of his ideas, was his personal destiny. Therefore, in the examination of his life the biographical data must not be separated from his literary activity. His life was not rich in external events. His travels in Italy, France, and Germany gave him a series of occasions for interesting articles, but those were only occasions, which awakened in his soul certain motifs, moods, ideas, but yielded nothing essentially new. Rosanov's soul did not need external impulses—it was rich by nature, and created out of itself. The Vatican and the Coliseum were to Rosanov's creation of just the same importance as any flat in any Petersburg street. He lived wholly "within himself". And "within himself" he remained till the end of his days. Sergiev Posad whereto he moved in the beginning of 1918 brought nothing new to his moods; in the stillness of a thoroughly Christian and Orthodox little town, Rosanov wrote his perhaps most "antichristian" pages—*The Apocalypse of Our Times*. He thought that we all were slowly but surely dying, passing into the night, into non-being, and yet doing this as "braggarts", as "actors", without a cross or prayer. And that we were dying from this sole cause—from disrespect for ourselves, from nihilism.

The theme of *The Apocalypse* is interwoven of religious—philosophical and social--political problems. The title, according to Rosanov, needs no explanation, in view of the events in Russia which have not a sham but a real apocalyptical significance. From the former Christianity have been formed gigantic voids, into which thrones, classes, groups, labour, riches are tumbling. All this is tumbling down into the emptiness of the soul, deprived of its old contents. In his article "The Disrupted Kingdom" Rosanov laments over the fall of Russia, blaming Russian literature for it, and fixes his gaze on the ages gone by, on the Apocalypse, that mysterious heart-searing book. He thinks that the Apocalypse is not a Christian book, that the Christ of the Apocalypse has nothing in common with the Christ of the Evangel. Rosanov particularly attacks Christianity for its impotence to help man, for its abstractions, for its ignorance of the cosmos.

The sun was lighted before Christianity and it will not be extinguished, were even Christianity to come to an end.

"Try to crucify the sun", he says in a note, "and you will see which is God".

In this, to him, is the limitation of Christianity. With Christianity alone man can't live. . . . The sun is greater than Christ, and more than Christ does it desire man's happiness. . . Speaking of the works of the spirit as opposed to those of the flesh Christ thereby showed that He and the Father were not one. The Father's teaching differs from the Son's by its ceaseless solicitude for man, which envelops and embraces him. To Rosanov this is significant and valuable, for he is convinced that that solicitude, and, generally, the physiology with which the Old Testament is permeated, is cosmical. To him the earthly is the pledge, and not the antithesis of the heavenly. The heavenly emerges from the earthly, as a butterfly from a caterpillar.

In his adoration of the earthly Rosanov does not see that his view is correct only in the category of the earthly, material, concrete, and empirical; and that his so very simplified conception cannot be applied to the noumenal world. If the Father is a noumen, then the Son is a phenomenal image, i.e., not the completion, but the reflection of the Father. . . . Love and hatred of Christ lived inseparably in Rosanov's contradictory soul. "Thou alone art beautiful, Lord Jesus", he explains, "and Thou hast profaned the world by Thy beauty". And he adds: "And yet the world is God's". He believes that Christ has arisen, but he does not rejoice in it: Christ terrifies him. Christ, according to him, has "emasculated God", "He is terrifying", He is not the lover of men, but a seductive enemy. Perfectly different is Moses, "the greatest of the ancients"; he was not eloquent and fascinating like Christ; on the contrary, he was tongue-tied, and stammered; and "by this combination of the innocent and funny we recognize the Divine book and the Divine acts".

Rosanov in his Apocalypse dwells at length on the destinies of the Russian people. It seems to him that the Russian people cannot rule, has no talent for ruling: it is just satisfied with mere gossip and talk.

One of the numbers, comprising *The Apocalypse of Our Times,* ends with the following words: "I am exhausted. I can't go on any longer. Two or three handfuls of flour, two or three handfuls of buckwheat, or five hard-boiled eggs can often save my day. . . . Reader, save your writer" . . . (and then follows Rosanov's address). There were people who laughed, in the press, at this request, and who accused Rosanov of "begging". This "begging" was merely the desperate cry of a man who passionately wanted to live and to work, but could not; for he was starving, suffering from hunger, cold, and exhaustion. Rosanov dreamed of crowning his life-work with a grandiose elaboration of his theme. He believed in the coming regeneration of Russia, in spite of everything. The apocalyptical revolution was taking place before his very eyes, and yet he believed in the value of that revolution. To one of his friends he wrote that he wanted to write such an apology for the Revolution, as the Revolution itself could not dream of.

Love and hatred were strangely combined in his enigmatic soul. Duality existed in his attitude to Russia, to the Revolution, to the Jews; in a word, to everything his active, inquiring, rebellious soul came into contact with. In that contradictoriness there was no lie, nothing double-faced, insincere, casual: he strove to fathom the depths of things, their very essence; and the ultimate secrets surely are antinomian, and cannot be known by mere assertion or negation. . . . In his most intimate, in his religious profundity, he tenderly loved Christ, and yet rejected historical Christianity. . . .

Rosanov was more interested in the private affairs of writers than in their works. He knew quite well *where* to find the key to the understanding of the individual peculiarities of authors. And doubtless he was right in raising the question of "underclothing", although this indiscreet question often leads to revolting answers. . . . And, indeed, to differentiate "the author" from "the man" is as strange as to differentiate a flower from its roots, and to maintain that these are two completely different growths.

That is why I should like to fix as distinctly as I can Rosanov's "face", to record his words, habits, sympathies.

My first meeting with him took place in Vyriza, a summer resort, at his bungalow, where I arrived in July, 1915, in response to his invitation.

He had just got up from his afternoon doze, and I could hear him splashing his face behind the wall of the little study where I sat waiting for him. Soon there came in an elderly man, not tall, of a most peaceful and genial appearance. I had expected to see a tall "Oblomov", with a ginger-coloured mane and blue eyes. Instead, there stood before me a straight, energetic, rather thin man with a grey head, with a yellow-grey moustache and a little beard. In his mobile face black (brown) eyes shone cunningly and sensibly. He seemed to me restless and concentrated at the same time. The first words he said were: "I'm glad to make your acquaintance. . . . You're a German, a Lutheran, aren't you?"

At the very opening of our conversation it became clear that

Rosanov valued most in man his attraction to religion, and repulsion from positivism.

The conversation turned on the Church, on the University, students, on Vladimir Soloviov, Bergson, Maeterlinck. I looked at Rosanov eagerly. "So this is the man," I thought, "around whom three or four years ago (before his expulsion from the Religious-Philosophic Society in 1913) the Petersburg aristocracy of mind and talent used to gather; the man in whose study, as one witness put it, used to go on the most 'amazing' conversations, conversations unique in their content, originality, and heat".

Rosanov read to me a few passages from *Fallen Leaves, Vol. II,* which was just out. . . .

Everything in Rosanov seemed to me then extraordinary, except his appearance. His appearance was rather ordinary, the type of an old official or schoolmaster; he might also have passed as a beadle or verger. Only his eyes, deep, probing, seemed not those of an official nor of a schoolmaster. He had the habit of getting into another's soul at once, without preliminaries, just "in his overcoat and goloshes", without hesitating for a second.

"The overcoat and goloshes" habit in him was bewildering and not always pleasant. As to the rest he was fascinating: the fireworks of his uttered words, of which each had its perfume, taste, colour, weight, is unforgettable. He was in a state of unceasing, continuous creation, so that in his company it was rather difficult to think: all the same you could not keep time with his ideas; the torrent of his own ideas overflowed any one else's ideas, and I think he never listened to others. But to hear him was sheer delight.

He did not in the least "play the part" of a famous writer, he did not show off, coquet. In everything he was simple, unconstrained, without any fear of being tactless or "bad form". He passed sharply from one mood into another, from tenderness to irritation, from sadness to merriment. His thought (in conversation) always proceeded in zigzags, in bumps. At times he would say something so unexpected and odd that he just seemed crazy, silly, or abnormal. One of his habits was continuous smoking, almost without a break: nearly all day long he was rolling short cigarettes, and smoked one after another. His way of walking was peculiar—quick and almost shy, yet direct. He usually sat with one leg under him, and shaking the other.

After our meeting at Vyriza, I often went to see Rosanov in Petersburg. In 1917 he was completely absorbed in his *Oriental Motifs,* which he began then to publish in small numbers (it stopped with the third issue). He was engrossed in Egyptian art, he loved and pondered over each detail, was in raptures over the various symbols and rites of ancient Egypt, abusing the learned Egyptologists, particularly Maspero and Champollion. . . His, the Rosanovian, Egyptology was, indeed, original; it was a sort of phallic lyricism (the image of the phallus drove him to ecstasy); it was an almost actual contact with the sanctities of the ancient world, a feeling for it which bordered on real tenderness.

Rosanov's flat resembled the host: there was nothing banal in it, and it was difficult to say which was the drawing room, or study, or bedroom. In the drawing room there was a library, a mass of books, a mask of Strakhov, a statuette of the Madonna, a collection of old coins. Here visitors used to sit; it was a place for talking. Rosanov's study (which was also his bedroom) was his work-room and the place for friendly and intimate conversation.

In his study were only his most favourite books. Dostoevsky's *Journal of an Author* was on his table, also the Bible. Over the table was a large portrait of A. A. Rudnev, his mother-in-law; on the table stood photographs of his daughters. . . .

Of Tolstoy, Rosanov spoke variously, now with irritation, now with reverence. "The old man was wonderful", said Rosanov to me, describing a meeting with Tolstoy. "When I said good-bye to him, I embraced him and kissed his hand, the noble hand which had written *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenin* and so many other things, which made people happy and say to one another: 'How good it is that I am alive, whilst he lives, not before, not before him; and now I am so happy with these pages of art and wisdom' ". Yet this did not prevent Rosanov from declaring (in *Solitaria*) that "Tolstoy has lived an utterly banal life". He tries to persuade us that Tolstoy knew no suffering, no crown of thorns and no heroic struggle for his convictions, and that people loved him very little and that his death did not really upset anyone.

Once showing me Tolstoy's photograph, Rosanov said: "He sent me this photograph through Strakhov, but did not inscribe it. Never mind. After all, you know, he was a giant!"

The same duality marked Rosanov's attitude to Vladimir Soloviov. Certain of Soloviov's ideas he stubbornly ignored, despised, or rather was bored by them. He said that Soloviov "lacked the Russian spirit", "Russian warmth", and he considered him an "international, European writer, brilliant, cold, steely". Soloviov, according to Rosanov, was a "strange, very gifted and terrible man". . . .

When Rosanov was working on his *Oriental Motifs,* and was wholly absorbed in Egypt and spoke of nothing else, he once repeated the story, told him by Soloviov, of how he, Soloviov, once drank champagne, seated at the base of a pyramid. "What sacrilege!" Rosanov said in agitation. "A pyramid, ancient wisdom, beauty, religion—everything is there!—and he in his top-hat gulping down champagne! Think now, how could I help abusing him!"

Of Tchekhov, Rosanov once said: "Tchekhov?—nothing particular in him. He looked at life, and what he saw he wrote down. A very fine writer, people got to like him, and began reading him. But he is a cold one, and there's nothing particular in him. I understand his success, but don't enjoy it".

Certain ideas held in common created a bond between Rosanov and A. L. Volynsky, the critic and philosopher. But in their ways of thinking, in their very minds they were always strangers to one another. "You are too logical", Rosanov would say to Volynsky; "You polish your ideas too finely. And besides, you have a Roman nose, and we Russians love a potato-shaped nose. It's that Roman nose of yours that stands in the way of our friendship". He called Volynsky "a Jew of the Greek Orthodox faith"; he valued his interest in Orthodoxy, in the personality of Christ, in the destinies of the Russian Church, etc. Especially dear to Rosanov was Volynsky's campaign against the radical and socialist literary critics. Once Volynsky and Rosanov happened to be present at a performance by Isidora Duncan at the Maly Theatre in Petersburg. Suddenly, Rosanov ran from his box to the stalls where Volynsky sat, and embracing him, said: "I suddenly remembered your great exploits against the critics and I came running here to give you a kiss".

He avoided talking of the Merezhkovskies. Only once he said with terror about Mme. Merezhkovsky (Hippius): "I say, she is not a woman, but the real devil—both in her mind and in all the rest. . . . Don't let us talk about her". . . .

During the years I used to go to Rosanov's house (1915-1917) the members of the Religious-Philosophic Society no longer came to his Sundays. Many writers ceased their acquaintance with Rosanov on so-called "moral" grounds, which, however, had nothing in common with real morality. Of the writing fraternity there still at times used to come to see him—A. Remizov, K. Choukovsky, M. Kuzmin, N. Lerner, A. Izmailov, and a few men from the "conservative camp". . . .

Rosanov was magnificent in polemics. It was not "argument" (for how could you argue with Rosanov?), but a mental tournament, wrestling. I remember one Sunday at-home, when Rosanov was in particularly high spirits. It was a mixed company: many lady "admirers", a painter from the Crimea, Professor Souslov, Tigranov, and many others. The conversation was lively, all the "heat" coming from Rosanov, who was pouring out a stream of ideas, images, mimicry, gestures. At moments he went so far as to lose all sense of "decency". "What? An autonomous Ukraine?" he shouted at a girl who devoutly gazed into his face. "Here, take your autonomy!" and he made an obscene gesture. . . . If in the process of his idea he had to touch on very intimate matters he spoke with perfect freedom, without any restraint. Once he even said that, when he was at work, for the sake of inspiration he used to touch with his left hand "the source of all inspiration", ("I then write better").

It is typical of Rosanov that in discussing literary or public men he was above all interested in the personality, in the "physiognomy" of the man. "What does he look like?" Rosanov would inquire. "Is he married? Has he any children? Is he well-off, or poor?" The physiognomy of a person was to him the paramount thing, and from this he arrived at conclusions as to the rest of the man. Many men of the "left" were physiologically antipathetic to him, and consequently "their works deserved no attention". In a man he above all loved and respected the man, and only afterwards his "complexion" and the "various other things".

The problem of sex (in its religious-philosophic aspect) was

Rosanov's favourite theme of conversation. But he preferred to talk on that theme in private, and not in company. "You know, as a rule", he used to say, dropping his voice and almost shrinking, "one has to speak about these things in *a whisper,* yes, in a *whisper,* as one speaks of what is most mysterious and sacred. . . And we, impudent fellows that we are, shout it all out and write books about it". . . .

His preoccupation with the problem of sex was regarded by his wife and daughters without any sympathy at all. Once he began speaking rapturously of a new article on sex which he had just published. "What you have written is filthy and nothing else", exclaimed one of his daughters with a grimace. Rosanov shook with noiseless laughter and said : "She will go on like that for another five years, repeating 'filthy, filthy'; then she will understand and, oh, how well she will understand" . . .

His daughters often argued with him, and one of them used now and then to have recourse to hysterics, as the most irrefutable argument. His wife simply used to fall asleep during such conversations, either because of weak health or perhaps from sheer boredom : she evidently was outside the sphere of Rosanov's ideas. But he valued her very much, considered her a "moral genius", and took very great care of her. At times he was brusque with her. Once he answered some question of hers rather rudely. But when she left the room, he suddenly got alarmed : "I say, I believe I have hurt mother—I'll go and ask her forgiveness". And with his shuffling, quick walk he went to the next room. He whispered there for a while, and returned with a radiant face : "It is all right now".

Whereas Rosanov's literary sympathies and antipathies were distinct and unequivocal, his social and political tastes were very difficult to make out. After the Revolution of 1905, "when the officials retired", he began abusing the authorities. When, with the suppression of the revolution, the "officials returned", he began criticizing their opponents. Now he was in raptures over the Revolution, now in ecstasies over the monarchy. Very curious in Rosanov was his combination of psychological love for the Jews with political anti-semitism. Sympathizing instinctively with Jews, he at the same time advocated pogroms against them for "the Christian boy tortured by the Jew Bailis". In the same breath he cursed and blessed the Jews. Not long before his death he repented, and requested that all his books containing attacks on the Jews should be burnt; and he wrote penitent letters to the Jewish nation. Yet these letters are puzzling: there are in them "compunctions of conscience", tenderness along with derision. This, however, is beyond a doubt, that Rosanov's anti-semitism and the anti-semitism of the *Novoye Vremya* were utterly different. On the whole, Rosanov found himself in the "conservative camp" quite accidentally; he did not try to "accommodate" himself there, but was just "thrown up" on the right bank. "I am a writer, not a journalist", Rosanov said more than once. "My business is to write, and I am quite indifferent as to who publishes my articles."

I remember his ecstasy in 1917 after the February Revolution. He was agitated, excited, and yet enraptured by the events, saying that all would be well, that "now Russia would reveal herself", etc. "I shall develop the ideology of the Revolution," he said in one letter, "and give it such a justification as the Revolution itself never dreamt of".

That ecstasy did not last long. Soon came dire poverty. More than once he had to humble himself to get a mere piece of bread. He, who ceaselessly worked all his life long, had to pick up cigarette ends outside public-houses and at the railway station, and of a dozen ends thus collected he would make one cigarette. "Out of charity" some bookseller would let him have a cup of tea.

And yet his thought was bubbling over, he wanted to live, he felt a keen interest in people. As a man, owing to hunger and cold, he "gave in". But as a writer he did not give in, and did not try to "adapt" himself. Rosanov's flight to Sergiev Posad in 1918 was explained by many as a cowardly desire on his part to disappear from the horizon. This is partly true. Rosanov experienced a state of desperate panic. "The time has come when one has to pack up quickly and fly", he said. But he was not a coward. . . . In the autumn of 1918, walking with S. N. Dourylin in Moscow, he spoke in a loud voice, addressing himself to the passers-by: "Do show me, please, a real live Bolshevik, I should very much like to see one". As they entered the Moscow Soviet, he said: "Show me the head of the Bolsheviks—Lenin or Trotsky. I'm awfully interested. I am Rosanov, the monarchist". Dourylin, put out by Rosanov's inadvertent frankness, begged him to keep silent, but he did not succeed.

I believe Rosanov never wrote more inspiring, fiery letters than those he wrote during the last few months of his life. . . . These letters breathe an indefinable tenderness and are saturated with the bitter poison of poverty : hunger, dire want, and exhaustion.

His last days were a continuous Hosanna to Christ. Bodily pain could not suppress his spiritual joy, his glorious transfiguration.

"Embrace one another", he said, "let us embrace one another in the name of the Risen Christ. Christ has arisen ! What joy, what delight ! Indeed, miracles are happening to me, and what these miracles are I will tell you some time, later". . . .

Before his death his pains ceased. At his own request he received the last sacrament four times, Extreme Unction once, and three times the prayers for the dying were read over him. During the last prayer he passed away, without pain, quietly and peacefully—on January 23rd, old style, 1919.

Rosanov who fought against Christ, who rejected His teaching, which seemed to him to reduce to ashes the flowers of life and to drive away the joys of life, died in a splendid contradiction with himself. . . .

E. GOLLERBACH,

(*Translated by S. S. Koteliansky*).

"SHAKESPEARE (the English Chikamatsu) SPELLS RUIN" *

I HAVE never yet met a man of sense who did not appreciate the puppets at their true worth.

Chikamatsu, the Japanese Shakespeare, wrote his one hundred and four plays for puppets.

But not exactly for silly puppets, not for puppets who were forced for gain to carry on as did those Roman Puppets which visited London in 1923.

He made his plays for the dolls, because he had seen dolls made to move like angels.

The Roman Puppets which you have seen in London were made to imitate actors, a silly thing to do, and a rude one to attempt.

If it offended actors, I am not surprised, but I am perfectly certain that Chikamatsu's puppets would have offended no one, would have pleased all, and would have reminded the best actors precisely what is possible in acting.

This is what happened in Japan.

When Chikamatsu opened his theatre, every one saw that here was great drama greatly performed.

These dramas acted by the dolls held the stage close on a hundred years, the actors were no longer followed, the actors thereupon, showing great good sense, began to study the whole art of acting from a finer angle.

They, more than any others, flocked to the puppet shows, and at the end of a hundred years had mastered the old art once more.

The puppets had served their turn; they went away until another crisis should make their reappearance a necessity.

I do not mean that no puppet shows were ever seen again,

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* *MASTERPIECES OF CHIKAMATSU: The Japanese Shakespeare. Translated by Asataro Miyamori. Revised by Robert Nichols. Illustrated. Kegan Paul, 21/- net.*

all I mean is that they stood aside to allow the great actors to once again show us what it meant to be a fine actor.

Some puppet shows survived and still survive, and are appreciated by men of taste.

Puppet Show in England

What is our puppet show? A large sort of box, three or four or more ill-made but jolly sort of rag and bone dolls are shoved up, and the fun begins. The sillier the play the better; the show lasts half an hour and the pennies are then collected.

Puppet Shows in Japan

For this a large stage is needed, at one side sit "Chanters"; not the kind favoured by Mr. Yeats, but men who have given their lives to studying how to recite as their fathers and grandfathers had recited before them. Tradition.

These men are very highly thought of in Japan: are (if it count for you) highly paid.

They recite the play, each one seated before a desk; two, three, or more recite.

On the stage come the puppets. These creatures are not necessarily comic, they are not merely picturesque, they are not flimsy nor gawky, nor do they imitate the faults of actors, neither do they imitate the qualities of actors: they are themselves.

The puppets are complete figures and are held by their manipulators, and are not hung by wire. A puppet is worked by two, three, or even more manipulators.

The chief manipulator is seen . . . the others wear hoods and seem only like the shadows which we sometimes discern surrounding a well designed figure in a portrait.

The puppet then begins to move according to design, for you know that casual or "natural" movement is not favoured by Japanese puppets or any actors of good sense.

This does not mean that the effect is a clock-work effort; it merely means that the effect is dramatic. To be dramatic we have even learnt that a playwright must *design* his play; making it *seem* natural he has often to actually *be* quite unnatural.

Chikamatsu reminds us of this when he says "The *joruri,* while it deals with matters as they are, sometimes describes things which have no existence save in art".

And when an age is not topsy-turvy its actors follow the dramatist and strive even to design their speech, movements, play of face, and everything else.

In a topsy-turvy age we take this to be a misguided notion and we point to the worst puppets to prove our point.

It takes less than a short London season to do this, so easily is a topsy-turvy public gulled by whatever Sir Oracle may write in the Sunday papers.

If he cry out in surprise that a wretched doll is a wretched doll, he will point to it as proof that all puppets are contemptible, wretched dolls, the public will immediately run around lashing themselves and crying out "down with the puppets".

Naturally, the actors will smile with good-natured tolerance, to hear the dolls called contemptible, and will forgive the few fools who once supposed that puppets could be anything else.

Now, puppets are not in the very least contemptible.

But you do not want me to go into all that again. I have said my say, and if anyone is curious as to what I said I can only refer him to my book *On the Art of the Theatre.*

What we are concerned with here is the surprising piece of news, recently made popular amongst us, that the Japanese Shakespeare, a wise man and a great writer, actually saw fit to write one hundred and four plays for puppets rather than for actors.[1]

Let us see whether he did this because he was cynical, or because he made more money by doing so, or because he hated actors, or because he held the real stage as profane, or for some personal prejudice, or why.

This is the story.

Chikamatsu was born about the year 1652 and died in 1724.

Before Chikamatsu was born three theatres had existed in Japan.

First the *No* drama; then the *Kyogen* or comic interludes; and, lastly, the *Kabuki* or popular affair.

Chikamatsu then created the *Joruri* or puppet play.[2]

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[1] A writer in the old days called Chikamatsu "a god of writing".

[2] A short time ago the London critics proved that Shakespeare was not seemly when performed by puppets. Strange then that Chikamatsu, who wrote a hundred and four long dramas

"The *No* play of Japan was the prototype of the puppet plays and of plays for the regular theatre," writes our author; "A large number of these *No* plays were written by the famous *No* actors Kwan-ami (1333-1384) and his son Sé-ami (1363-1444)."

We had all heard about the *No,* but I am not sure we know this fact, that actors were the playwrights. It is rather an important one.

The actor Sé-ami wrote more than a hundred out of the two hundred and forty-two *No* plays now in actual performance; he also wrote the music for his hundred plays and for those by other authors, "and it was by him that the technique of the *No* play and its dance was brought to such perfection *that subsequent actors and writers were unable to contribute anything further to it*".

That, too, is a fact which I think we were in ignorance of—anyhow, I was. It is not without point. Sé-ami (the actor) was, moreover, "an able literary critic—the only man of letters in old Japan who created a philosophy of art which he could justly call his own".

This author whose words I am quoting seems to be able to enlighten us on just the very places where we grope in the dusk.

For we always wondered how even the cleverest and the most inspired poets could create this *No* drama without any knowledge of the possibilities of the stage, and we never stopped to guess that it was an actor who did it. Once admit the actor and the mystery is cleared up.

This actor was like our own financially successful actors, he held that "It is essentially the aim of the *No* performance to beguile all people, high and low". Our successful actors always consider the high.

It is just because Shakespeare, the English Chikamatsu, will

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for puppets, should be called the Japanese Shakespeare. But what the critics should have said was that Shakespeare or any other author, when performed by *silly* puppets made to ape the faults of the worst actors, is bound always to become worthless. That is what the London critics for some unknown reason failed to say. They damned all puppets because these stupid ones from Rome had behaved like fifth-rate actors. Dramatic criticism must be damned because of the few incompetents who continue in England and elsewhere to fail in their duty . . . is that it?

also for ever be considering the high as well as the low that our actors are always to be seen tumbling over one another in their eagerness to produce his plays.

It was in or about the year 1686 that Chikamatsu, at the age of thirty, began writing for marionettes.

Before his coming, puppets had long appeared. A certain Hikita, a puppet showman of Nishinomiya, is supposed to have invented the art of manipulating these little people. He lived in the early seventeenth century, but we may believe that long before that time puppets were known in Japan, for they were known in China, in Java, in Burma, almost everywhere since the year one.

But puppets without the stories to accompany their motions were not what the Japanese wanted—and these stories Chikamatsu supplied. When he first came to think about all this, there existed already (1338-1565) a profession of chanters or reciters of stories, histories, and Buddhist legends. This separate art had been taken from the *No* drama.

Some of us can chant a story who cannot act one and who abhor covering our faces either with grease paint or with masks. So a separate profession, that of the chanters, was formed; later on, at the close of the sixteenth century, they added the music of the *samisen.* Two or three would chant; three or four would play upon the *samisen.* Doubtless, some did this as we vamp on the banjo in the hope that some great impresario may discover in our doings a thing that big, spoiled baby, the modern public, may just love while sucking its thumb; others tinkled and chanted, more like . . . how shall we put it? well, let us say like masters.

This chanting and playing became known as *Joruri,* and this term *Joruri* was, awhile later, applied to the puppet play, where chanters, *samisen* players, puppet makers, and manipulators all worked as one to interpret whatever good story they were able to get hold of. It is not the kind of thing you can do in a hurry. We realize this when we read that it took the Japanese three hundred and fifty years to prepare for Chikamatsu. It's a satisfactory notion all round, is it not? It threw no five hundred actors suddenly out of work; it caused no revolution in the dramatic world. Things which are allowed to grow when they come into the mind of the artist, if *helped* to grow, never do upset anything or anybody. They upset big babies sucking their thumbs, of course, but no one and nothing else. Yet it is as well, if we want to be ready for a great playwright who is coming, to move in the direction of the light, even if we have to take centuries over it. Yes, it is as well to go in the right direction.

Chanters and musicians singing and playing in Japan for three hundred and fifty years led to a certain *proficiency*. So that, when at the request of the puppet-master, Takémoto Gidayu (1650-1714), Chikamatsu agreed to write pieces for him and his platform in Osaka, there was no muddling-through; all was ready for the big event. Gidayu's partners were Takézawa Gonnemon "an able *samisen* player" and "two extraordinarily dexterous puppeteers—Hachirobei and Saburobei".

Previous to his puppet-play work, Chikamatsu had, at the age of twenty-five, exercised his faculties by writing a popular play for Tojuro of Kyoto called *The Evil Spirit of Lady Wisteria*: from 1677 to 1704 he wrote other popular plays, twenty-six historical pieces being attributed to him.

But his fame rests on the *stories* written for the chanters and puppets to play with. At the age of fifty-one he gave up the laborious task of writing for the actors and turned with delight to the puppet theatre at Osaka, collaborating in the new and serious work with his friend Gidayu.*

This step is considered to have been the critical one of his career, and it also marks a turning point in the history of the Japanese drama; for the actors' theatres lost their prestige while the puppet theatre "advanced with new vigour and entered upon the brightest period of its history".

For forty-five years Chikamatsu wrote on, giving Japan eighty historical and twenty-four dramatic pieces, and all these were written for the puppets—one hundred and four works in all. He died in 1724, at the age of seventy-two in the same year as his partner Gidayu, the chanter.

The Tethered Steed was his last piece. It is a thing of astonishing turns and surprises, of impossible happenings which for all this seem as natural as the arrival of a motor-car or the postman at our front door. Great emotions move the persons of the piece and other emotions steer them from their direct course. What happens in the stories of Shakespeare and Ariosto happens on this puppet stage. Great silences come over the piece broken by pandemonium, giving place again to complete silence. Violent colours in every place arouse us and fade as the pale moon shines out holding us calm until once more we are in a whirl of colour. Humour flashes here and there at unexpected corners—but not so as to render us inane, for there are too many stars shining and the spaces are immense, and those who guffaw do not rule the state in Japan.

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* "A wooden Miranda with only one gesture, quite fails to grip our attention"—*Daily Telegraph*, May 29th, 1923. The Roman Marionettes in *The Tempest*. Exactly! Chikamatsu with Gidayu, Gonnemon, Hachirobei, and Saburobei would not have failed.

A phantom crashes to earth or emerges from the spout of a bamboo water pipe. Suspensed terror and dawn in suspense play here and there—a monstrous spider becomes the prey of a beautiful girl, into whom she pours her soul in horrible imprecations.

All is as real as Sherlock Holmes or Nick Carter at their worst, yet all is as exquisite as Keats or Coleridge at their best. The bones are Carter's but the soul still remains the unconquerable soul. Over and over again we are aware that someone who will stand no nonsense is making this play move : all is so direct and when, *as* it moves, some one, who only loves a little of that same nonsense, breathes a flush of pink over the whole or smoothes out some folds of pale grey.

"What can Kocho be about?" grumbled one of the maids. "It is very lazy of her not to have shown her face yet—Kocho San! Kocho San", she cried fretfully.

Or, "Now, Kocho San", cried another, "look, there's a big blue spider on that *yatsudé*. An awful beast. Its poison will kill a man. To think of such a creature being in front of the bride's apartment. It's your duty to take it away or it may find its way into her dishes".

Haven't we these preposterous lines in the detective tales and novelettes of the day? But where are the other lines? . . . Cut out, of course, if they ever got written : "for it is essential to beguile the high", etc. . . .

In another scene the chief female figure is in the garden of a palace, and, hearing a whistle, glances around and then goes to the bamboo water pipe, applies her mouth to its spout from which the water has now ceased to flow, and, speaking into it, says, "Brother, you called me did you not? I am your sister—Kocho", and then she applied her ear to the spout.

Sister and brother carry on a long conversation through this telephone from the garden to a river bed far off: and this in the year 1724 and the telephone (supposedly) not yet thought of.

The terrible spider returns at the end imbued with the more fearful soul of Kocho's fathomless hatred. "Hardly had the awful voice ended when from the creature's finger tips issued innumerable webs, which instantly twined themselves about the lady. Vain were her struggles—they did but serve to knit the bonds the tighter. She suffered agonies. She stumbled about the room all but in collapse. Vast gusts whistled through the garden trees: the water in the artificial pond made its incommunicable sound; will-o'-the-wisps gleamed and were gone in the darkness; the roll and rattle of thunder added to the pandemonium".

"I may be pardoned for again urging the axiom that exaggeration of acting and bombast of language are indispensable to effect in the puppet theatre," writes the author of this book; Chikamatsu himself saying a little differently "Art lies in the shadowy frontiers between reality and unreality. Art appears unreal, but it is not unreality. . . . in the drama, while aiming at reality, it nevertheless contains something contrary to this nature of reality. This is what art is and this art delights me".

But the sayings of this artist or the comments by the lucid editor of this book of plays are but of secondary importance; what matters, what thrills and enchants us, are the plays themselves; they really *are* the thing for once in a way. Surprise on surprise meets you on every page; the "astonishing" that you go to find in a theatre and so seldom do find to-day is here enveloping everything.

All is hairbreadth escape and discovery—failure or success—suspense and act. Humanly beautiful because he is so bold in his touch; divinely lovely because he is so delicate in his touch.

Chikamatsu reminds me more of Ariosto than of Shakespeare, and is more like the Italian because all is written to be retold, by a single chanter, not talked out at each other by twenty or thirty actors in twenty or thirty different (and indifferent) voices. The true dramatist is not concerned with the imitations by actors of the voices of old men, leading ladies, or juvenile leads; he is unconcerned about nearly all that concerns us in our theatre of to-day. He is contemptuous of all which hampers us to-day. It was in a mood of discontent that Chikamatsu resolved to leave the actors' theatre for the puppet stage. Shall we some day take a new turn and boldly follow Chikamatsu and the masters instead of limping after Shaw, Pirandello, and Tchekhov, and the non-masters and watching dull disciples licking boots?

Shall we do this? May be so; but we will never do so until we work for the people, the true public who loves a true play in a real theatre, that public of ragamuffins and desperadoes who flock to the little un-Roman puppet shows in Sicily and Naples, that public which in our London numbers 200,000 if it numbers a man, that public which is nothing to us because it cannot be duped by anyone on earth, but responds solely to all that is most wonderful in the world, provided it is the genuine article, in fact that highest browed public in all the world, our real Englishmen and women.

GORDON CRAIG.

CAFE HAUNTERS

ON this fever'd glitter
Of far away water,
This burning mirage
Our parched lips move.

Water of Imagination
Intangible elixir
Image of the fountain
Stay here among us!

With this shadow *Alcohol*
We hide thee from our faces
We wrap thee in our mouths
Thou burning, bright,
Scarifying thing!

Thou hast put on these masks,
This stony loveliness,
More unutterably fair
Than the frozen Alps.

We would have thee fluid again
To taste in our veins
Thinner than fire
Or waters of ether;
We would smash these Idols
And drink up their bodies.

Our spirits seize them
Where they trembling sit;
The shrieks of the angels
In the wars of Milton
Are dark by the violet
Light of their cries.

Far-off is stillness
The stillness of water;
And dream-like wandering
Of hallucined stars.

NARCISSUS

NARCISSUS saw his image in a pool
"How beautiful!" and took root where he stood,
A swaying lithe wind-wand within the wood.
There lived his magic self, bewitchéd fool
To let his flowing blood in a form cool.
Yet without that idolatry he could
Never have known his soul's essential good—
Perception's shaping act's imprisoned tool.

"Blow wind! alas, alas, thou art without
And I am fastened here—monotony
Thou fatal lovely folly!" In the sky
His slender, nodding image reeled about
Blown by each gust among the imagery
Of rock and tree, who in dead outlines lie.

A BACTRIAN HORSE T'ANG PERIOD

BECALMED, move not thy limbs of snowy jade
Thou branch of moonlight, crystal of trackless space
Abandoned by twin demons whose cleaved race
Their ether selves into this carving made—
Jumped into solid at one last gambade
Swifter than light; to quintessential pace
Their soul's speed petrified in this small space;
To Timelessness Time fled in ambuscade!

O milk-white threnody of lovers twain,
Four hoovëd Speed that feeds on heavenly grass
And dost the green movement of the earth disdain
Where all thy champing ghosts their slow lives pass;
Thy path a silent sphere's illimitless plain;
Solitary, still, ecstacy's image and glass!

W. J. TURNER.

A MEMORY

TOWARDS the end of a hot afternoon in early summer James Worcester sat in Hyde Park with his married sister, Dorothy Mitchell. Their conversation had flagged; but they were so content to be in each other's company, after a long separation, that they accepted their silence. He had been thinking how little changed she was : how very little changed, for example, from what she was in that war summer, ten years ago, when she was only twenty-two and he only twelve.

Yes, she was quite the same. She was a little slimmer then, of course, and there might not have been the hardly noticeable lines at the corners of her mouth and between her eyes. She was tall, and her straight figure had a slender massiveness. Her hair and eyes were black, and she had lost neither the oval ruddiness of her cheeks nor the sudden whiteness beyond the colouring.

How distinctly he remembered the details of that far-off summer of war! But, then, they were significant, and the fact behind them, his love for Dorothy, was of the first importance to him. The whole family, his mother, his sisters Anne, Margaret, and Dorothy, his two brothers, had stayed at a resort on the south-west coast. They had a large house, a curious place full of windows, within sight of the sea. Beyond the garden lawn were a few apple and pear trees, but the fruit had been eaten long before it had ripened.

He had known, even at that time, what Dorothy meant to him. He had already felt how much of the joy went out of life in her absence, anger, or mere disapprobation. Indeed, he was dependent on her moods; he was obscurely accountable to her; and he had never just taken her for granted, as he had Anne and Margaret. She was, at once, remote and intimate, with her clear, fierce spirit, so charming, yet so dangerous and inexorable. He had entrusted her with his sense of security and it had never occurred to him that she was capable of injustice or of making a mistake.

They took possession of their seaside house at the end of July, and they were due to leave in the middle of September; but they had spent only a fortnight together. Margaret was then forced to return to her Whitehall office, to which she had so unnecessarily and unreasonably bound herself at the beginning of the war, and Dorothy, as a matter of course, went back to Town with her.

Those first two weeks had been delightful and they had had, for him, one moment of keen and bitter excitement. It was then that he saw Dorothy in the full strength of her body and her will. He had in mind, even now, the acrid and exhilarating sensation he had had then.

It happened one morning, after a night of violent storm, when he and Dorothy had played at surf-riding. They were watched by a crowd, huddled up against the crumbling base of the cliffs, beyond the thin beach waves. He had been terribly afraid; he had only joined her because he could never have looked on at her risk. He had scarcely been able to undress with his trembling fingers and he had stretched his arms in nervous ecstasies. As they made their way to the shore, their waterproofs beat stingingly against their bare legs. Dorothy had been, for him, hard and unseeing; and, when she stood on the sands, with her long, white limbs naked, with the piece of blue silk, as though swathed, round her trunk, he seemed to have lost touch with her. She appeared to have been suddenly absorbed in that grey world, to have become part of the rough sea and tireless wind. She had imposed herself on him. Far from the shore, hidden from them by a belt of flashing broken water, the waves had buried them. Dorothy was planted, with back curved against their onslaught, and she held the plank of wood from dangerously tossing to and fro. She had commanded him, laughing, her teeth flashing in her dark, streaming face; and suddenly as, leaping through the foam, he heard the grating of wood on sand, she had caught him round the body and they had sprawled together to the feet of their audience.

Later in the same day, the weather had cleared. At four o'clock, strolling about the town, he had met Dorothy, and they had had tea together under the hot sun, on a high balcony overlooking the sea. While he sat there, opposite the beautiful girl of whom he was, even then, consciously proud in the eyes of the world, he had touched a moment of absolute happiness. His sense of entire well-being had been intensified by his recognition of the contrast between their companionship in the morning and the afternoon. People at neighbouring tables looked at them, and he remembered how she had leant across to him, conferring with him over the menu, intent, her shoulders raised and her elbows on the embroidered white cloth.

The fourteen days before her return with Margaret were gone before they were all well accustomed to their surroundings. As the time for her departure drew near, he had become restless under the weight of a vague depression. There were moments when he could scarcely trust himself to speak. The sad light of the long evenings had penetrated him with its melancholy. And yet he was under the compelling and traditional necessity of hiding his feelings.

She left with Margaret at five o'clock of a stifling day. He had walked dejectedly to the station with George; the others had all gone by car. He was the last to say good-bye to Dorothy. "I'm sorry you're going," he had muttered. Afterwards, when he had gone off alone, staring moodily at the ground, his mind had been filled with the thought that a month would pass before he would see her again. A month that she would spend in London, alone with Margaret and their father, with the real danger of an air-raid day and night. He had wandered down to the beach which was becoming gradually deserted: and the sounds of the evening, like tea things clashed and laughed over, had seemed to him intimately sorrowful. He had found something acutely piteous in the foresaken sand castles. He sat down on one, facing the sea, and he had thought of the waves breaking there all through the lonely night and all through the lonely winter.

In the course of a few days, he emerged from his low spirits, although, to him, there was something wanting everywhere. There was not the same gaiety; and the return to a sobered and diminished household after a long escapade gave him, in his sense of contrast, an emotion of disillusionment. Often, rejoicing in the brightness of the sea, the sun, and the wind, he had thought of it as of an immediate, makeshift beauty bringing nearer, in its mere enjoyable passage, his return to London.

Every morning, his heart beating, he had looked in the papers for news of an air-raid on London; and every morning, seeing no such news, he would have a mood of reckless pleasure in all the little events of life. Such had been his manner of returning thanks to fate for his relief.

Dorothy sent him frequent letters. They would be full of detail about theatres and visits and they often ended with: "We send our love and ten shillings to be divided between you". Margaret would scribble that she missed them all: "We are looking forward to your being back". He had looked forward, too! He had been secretly sustained by the thought of Dorothy. He knew that, for the first day or two after their separation, there would be a sort of formality between them. She would be solicitous, just as though he were a stranger. He had perceived this peculiarity in their relationship on former occasions; and he waited to feel its charm. For the rest, this sentiment had by no means taken complete possession of his mind. It had just been one, in a long series, where each had been necessary to his enjoyment of life.

They came, eventually, near the last week-end of their stay in that gay western resort, so impersonal for them in spite of the pleasure it had yielded. It was Thursday and they were leaving for London on the following Tuesday. He had caught a rumour that Anne was going back before the others, the next afternoon, on Friday. This news had seriously disturbed him with a sense of tension and struggle. He found Anne seated in a deck chair on the sands. She was the eldest of the sisters, then, perhaps, twenty-three, a blonde with a charming manner. She assured him that she was going to Town on the following day. He stood before her, his hands thrust in his blazer pockets.

"Can I go with you?" he had demanded. She regarded him with her affectionate and attentive politeness. She was discreet, asking no questions.

"Of course you can. Just ask mother, too. Tell her I said I'd like you for a companion". His mother had showed the same attitude. It was impossible to say how much those two had divined; it had been part of their code to behave thus honourably towards their juniors.

He was joyous; and then he began thinking, with nameless apprehension, of his meeting with Dorothy, which would now take place, as it were, isolated. He had sent off the telegram announcing the time of their arrival. In the evening he had stared at the blue waters of the Channel and had thought that, if only there were no air-raid on London before he met Dorothy, all would be well. After that the world might come down about their ears.

At four o'clock on the following day, he left for London with Anne. The remainder of the family had escorted them to the station. It was very warm and the sun seemed to have made little progress from the zenith; but it had occurred to him, leaning out of the window as the seaside platform slipped by, that, when next he stepped from the train, it would be at Waterloo, full of evening shadows, with Dorothy on the watch for him.

For more than three hours, in an empty compartment, he sat in a corner, opposite Anne, looking out of the window. They hardly exchanged a word, but, whenever they glanced at each other, her eyes raised from her book and his turned from the countryside, she would smile beautifully, with that animated and infectious smile so well known among them. They had had tea together over a heavy silver-plated tray that she had balanced on her knees.

His secret disturbance had increased as they approached London. He shivered with excitement. He was afraid of meeting Dorothy, shrinking from the force of his own emotion, and yet the prospect of her not being at Waterloo to welcome him was intolerable. He wished, with a sense of terrible uneasiness, that their arrival might be delayed. "We are nearly there," he had said to Anne in his trouble. The light of the departed sun shone, in a bronze glow, on serried roofs. They slowed down at a large station and, thinking it the terminus, he had started nervously to his feet.

"Not yet," Anne smiled, "another ten minutes".

He had resettled himself with relief as though they had twelve more hours to go. But as he stared at the width of rails converging on their destination his heart beat heavily and he felt a bodily sinking which yet gave him no alarm.

He caught, from the inner curve of a bend, a sight of the glass roof. Anne stood up and took a small case down from the rack.

"I hope they're here," he whispered, in a strangled voice.

They were enveloped slowly in the gloom of the station. He saw people running on the platform, someone waved at him and opened the door from outside.

"There you are!" cried a voice. He found himself on the platform.

"Hullo, Dorothy," he said, with immense effort. She must have heard the drag in his voice and felt the strength in his clutch on her arm, for she stooped suddenly and he was lost in a close embrace. The world had seemed gone for him and he was only conscious of his hands clasped round her neck and his motionless face pressed to hers. It was long afterwards when he became aware of Margaret's saying, "What about me, old thing?" and of her fingers grasping his shoulder.

They had all made their way to a taxi through groups of soldiers. He sat in a dark corner near Dorothy and listened to the laughing clarity of her tones. At home, the peace of the vast rooms seemed so different from the brooding, stirring quietness of the seaside house. Before going up to bed he had come across Dorothy alone in the drawing-room. He made out her shining dress as she sat by an open window.

"I am glad to be back," he had said. She took this in silence, smiling. He had been suddenly overwhelmed by the thought of what she meant to him.

"I love you, Dorothy," he added.

"Of course," she rejoined, moving slightly.

"I mean that I love you more than I do anyone else." He had struggled for speech. "You do everything for me, you know everything about me," he had burst out. He had left her slowly as she sat in the luminous immobility of her light frock.

It was true. He loved her then, as now, with the combined force of his intellect and his emotion. His attachment was reasoned and profound. And yet, quite naturally, two years after that meeting, he had gone away to become a naval cadet; and she, through ten years, when he saw her less and less frequently, had grown from the clear and violent girl to this woman at his side, mother of children. She knew how to live, how to partake of all the joys.

He looked at her on the seat in Hyde Park.

"Let's go," she said, with animation, "I want to see my babies before they're put to bed."

He stood up, tall and broad shouldered. His manner towards her suggested a certain scrupulous, even rigid politeness. As they walked on, he observed :—

"I was thinking about that summer at Bournemouth."

"Were you?" she said gravely.

"I was only twelve," he continued, "but you've no idea what I went through".

"I knew something," she remarked, "on the night you came home".

"Believe me, Dorothy," he said, "I'm not one to live in retrospect and sentimental regrets for what was good as well as bad. But you and my whole idea of you seem to make for the stability and integrity of my life. I count on you. While you are here, I'll never be afraid of living my life and I'll have no fear whatever of losing my sense of its integrity. I assure you, you are my guarantee against—well, say against sentimental corruption, among other things".

"Oh, I shall always be here," she returned smiling, "so that you can go on living in the present without fear".

"I ask for nothing more," he said.

HERBERT LEON KAHAN.

W. B. YEATS AND THE CREATIVE MASK*

Browsing recently over Mr. Yeats's *Autobiographies*—a valuable book for the person given to speculation on the origin and machinery of literary activity—I came upon the following passage :—

> Years afterwards when I had finished *The Wanderings of Oisin,* dissatisfied with its yellow and its dull green, with all that overcharged colour inherited from the romantic movement, I deliberately re-shaped my style, deliberately sought out an impression as of cold light and tumbling clouds. I cast off traditional metaphors and *loosened my rhythm,* and, recognizing that all the criticism of life known to me was alien and English, became as emotional as possible but with an emotion which I described to myself as cold.

Mr. Yeats has certainly achieved that crystallization of emotion for which he strove. By creating for himself a myth opposite and complementary to that of Pygmalion he has learned how to imprison life in art. The process is that which Wordsworth more humanely described as "remembering emotion in tranquillity". Sooner or later, every artist must come to that process as his consciousness develops, as he rises above instincts, impulses, and the mechanical suggestion of environment, towards a subtle and blandly-suspicious condition of mind which alone is capable of valuable creative power. Only then can he be sure that he is speaking with his own voice; that he is reaching down to the permanent relationship existing between him and his fate. The discovery of that permanent and real self, shorn of all conventions, submissions, courtesies, and other disguises, is the aim of every being who possesses human dignity. Some find it soon and without effort, as for instance, Chatterton and Mozart. Others run on, in agonies of suspense and trial, from experience to experience, crisis to crisis, mentor to mentor, always about to reach self-realization, but only fully achieving it towards the end of life. The majority of us never succeed. We live and die obscured, masked by crowd-traditions and ideas, and so emerge at birth from oblivion to pass into the same oblivion at death, our sojourn here un-utilized.

How are we to know when we are truly ourselves? Mr. Yeats has a criterion :—

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* *Autobiographies, by W. B. Yeats, (Macmillan, 10/6).*

> As life goes on we discover that certain thoughts sustain us in defeat, or give us victory, whether over ourselves or others, and it is these thoughts, tested by passion, that we call convictions. Among subjective men (in all those, that is, who must spin a web out of their own bowels) the victory is an intellectual daily recreation of all that exterior fate snatched away, and so that fate's antithesis; while what I have called "The Mask" is an emotional antithesis to all that comes out of their internal nature. We begin to live when we have conceived life as a tragedy.

Here he sketches more deliberately the process of self-discovery. His "Mask" can surely be no more than that line of conduct and thought which is most difficult for our individual nature. I look out on the world and see where I succeed, where I conquer environment, where I make my personality most felt. In those directions I am complete and have fulfilled that part of my destiny. But, apart from that very limited field of conquest, I see myself baffled, overcome by helplessness before a too-complex problem of existence. A little circumstance, repeating itself as though at the prompting of some too-knowing and malicious demon, throws me down—fearful and chagrined. Certain planes of life, certain fields of activity or speculation, I *know* to be impossible to me. Perhaps my flair is for intuitive solutions of the problems of life. I may be able to glance at a face and leap to a correct estimate of the character behind it. I may be able to cleave through intellectual knots with sudden swords of vision. Let me beware of all these facilities. Let me treat them as self which is already fully grown and finished. If I believe in re-incarnation, let me say that these native powers of mine are an inheritance from former existences, and are nothing to my credit. What I achieve with them, I do not achieve of myself. It is done for me.

How then shall I prove that I have a daemon of creation, a will to impose upon fate? I must turn my mind to those thoughts and mental processes of which I am afraid. I must plunge into actions from which I shrink in dread or shyness. I must assume a Mask to hide my grimaces of fear from the world, and I must set up before my eyes an Image of perfection in these matters in which I am so imperfect. By a gradual changing of my features to fit that Mask; by a quiet but persistent dissolution of myself into that Image, I shall bring to my inherited strengths and faculties newer ones, more immediately suited to the particular accidence of my environment.

This may sound very old-fashioned, very reminiscent of Emerson's dogma of self-reliance; of the rigid and wearing discipline of Sparta, and its mechanical and unintelligent imitation, the English Public-School code. But, nevertheless, it seems to be the only way of developing one's personality so that one can stand four-square against the world. One may argue that there is a danger of self-destruction in such a practice; that the strain will dull the nerves, kill spontaneity, and banish from one's life the quality of joy without which there can be no triumph over circumstance. But I think the reply to that argument is that a certain repression gives us greater potential energy, just as a gas by compression has more dynamic force. Morbid conditions have their value, for they are significant of change and development. Who is more active-minded than the so-called pessimist? So we find Mr. Yeats insisting that "we begin to live when we have conceived life as a tragedy".

Without that conception, we are not sufficiently wary; we are not, as I hinted above, *suspicious* enough of the world around us, which, by the strength of its multifariousness, is always tending to dissipate our energies, to break down that coherence of idea and conduct, that continuity of purpose, by which a personality is made.

The conception of life as a tragedy is really the acknowledgment of one's own vulnerability to the onslaughts of the external world. How can one, from that basis, be satisfied to exploit the faculties with which one is already well equipped, and to ignore the weaknesses in one's armour? It is a policy of self-deception and cowardice, and is bound to lead to disaster. Our strengths are as strong as our weaknesses. Until we realize that, we can have no unity of being, that blessed state in which our inherent faculties attempt perfect freedom and expression. We come thus to a paradox : that to develop originality, we must suppress originality, and give our attention to those parts of our being in which we are commonplace. Who is more dreadful than the artist who works his talent to death? He becomes a repeating machine in his work; and in himself he degenerates into an irritable vanity that just fails to cover the sore of humiliation and failure. I cannot agree with Mr. Yeats when he says :—

> I now know that there are men who cannot possess "Unity of Being", who must not seek it or express it—and who, so far from seeking an anti-self, a Mask that delineates a being in all things the opposite to their natural state, can but seek the suppression of the anti-self, till the natural state alone remains. These are those who must seek no image of desire, but await that which lies beyond their mind—unities not of the mind, but unities of nature, unities of God—the man of science, the moralist, the humanitarian, the politician, St. Simon Stylites upon his pillar, St. Anthony in his cavern, all whose preoccupation is to seem nothing; to hollow their hearts till they are void and without form, to summon a creator by revealing chaos, to become the lamp for another's wick and oil; and, indeed, it may be that it has been for their guidance in a very special sense that the "perfectly proportioned human body" suffered crucifixion.

The man who seeks no image of desire, but awaits that which lies beyond his mind—well, I believe he will continue to wait. That process of "seeming nothing" of "hollowing one's heart" —is an effort of agony, the supreme act of energy. The integral parts of our being are so curiously integrated, and articulated each to the other, that, by the effort to stir up our weaker members, we set the whole hive working. John Keats's efforts and failures with the surgeon's knife had their value, as he discovered.

I think Mr. Yeats analyses this paradox of the human mechanism when he asks :—

> Does not all art come when a nature, that never ceases to judge itself, exhausts personal emotion in action or desire so completely that something impersonal, something that has nothing to do with action or desire, suddenly starts into its place, something which is as unforeseen, as completely organized, even as unique, as the images that pass before the mind between sleeping and waking?

I cannot see how Mr. Yeats reconciles this with his theory that there are men who achieve by shaping themselves like cups, into which the wine of inspiration is to be poured by some gracious external Hand. The only way by which this mortal, this blood-supported self can plunge through the obscurations of the physical world is by way of the intellect. We have to be logical, coherent, and scientific, before we can emerge into that plane of inspiration where the being becomes illogical and *more* coherent. Such a condition is one of crisis, which, as Mr. Yeats says, "joins our hidden self for certain moments to the trivial daily mind". I wish he would not occasionally deny himself by preaching that these divine crises can be induced by passivity in conduct and idea. He is too practical-minded, and too deeply experienced in the artist's life of self-immolation, to believe in this theory. I can only imagine that, when he supports it, he is playfully posing; indulging in one of those fits of impish irresponsibility which are the only leisure for men who spend their lives faithfully trying to fulfil their own genius.

RICHARD CHURCH.

NOTES AND REVIEWS

LANGUID STRINGS

The vulgar prejudice against the minor poetry of the eighteenth century may be defended so long as it does not attempt to include the period that may properly be called Augustan. When, therefore, Professor Nichol Smith, in his preface to *The Oxford Book of Eighteenth Century Verse,* says that the century was not merely one of decadence and preparation but one of "definite achievement", we have to distinguish periods of poetic fertility from simple measures of time. His adherence to the limits of the chronological century certainly helps his thesis, for by this means he has Pope, Swift, Prior, and Lady Winchilsea at one end of his anthology and Blake and Burns at the other. Wordsworth and Coleridge are there too, of course, but in their early manner they are scarcely distinguishable from several of their predecessors. By using the time-limit in this straightforward way, those who condemn the "eighteenth century" are disproved in their own terms; unless they respond more attentively to the challenge and consent to stigmatize a narrower period. Such a period, which no anthological charity can do much to rehabilitate, may be dated from about 1720 (for Pope assimilated all the elements of his style from much earlier sources) till 1780. Whether English poetry, in spite of the individual genius that worked in the next fifty years, has ever recovered as an organism from that period of depression is too long a question to be discussed now. At least we can say that, for sixty years, the instrument of English verse was thumbed with very little aptitude by men who seem to have had very little excuse for handling it at all; and the prejudices of literary criticism, which, for the sake of the system, will praise anything that is not positively incorrect, should not oblige us to pay homage to mere inoffensiveness. Verse, in each of its modes, is a medium which must be realized to the limits of its possibilities, or it is nothing. The writers of this middle period had not the excuse that they were engaged in forming an instrument, for they subscribed no technical innovations (though some revival of forms) to the equipment of their successors. To the formation of a conventional romantic sensibility, to the School of "Nature", they contributed earlier and more abundantly than is generally supposed, as this anthology clearly shows. But, if some excuse be necessary for their uninventiveness, it may, perhaps, be found in the fact that they were aware of three fully developed verse forms—spenserian stanza, miltonic blank verse, and the couplet. They are like men numbed among machinery of great precision and high speed, who dare only hope to keep the workings smooth. The names of Thompson, Johnson, Gray, Collins, and Smart must be in part excluded from these strictures. It is the smaller men, writing in a semi-romantic strain in a semi-urbane manner, whom it is difficult to consider with much respect. Their appearance coincides with the petering-out of the metaphysical influence. It is clear that Pope could not have evolved his style without a knowledge of the processes by which Donne worked his transmutations, but his own creation was so brilliant and so adaptable and so easily assimilated, it must be said, that the already unfashionable metaphysicals were completely obliterated. So English poetry gradually entered the Stage of Sentiment which advertised itself as the Age of Reason; whose decease in the greenest youth had escaped notice. In the finest seventeenth century poetry it is possible to say that the idea or thought is the immediate subject of expression; the feeling derives from the expression. In mid-eighteenth century verse feeling becomes primary and the thought derives from it. Consequently, the thought, which must be (whatever its order in the writer's processes) the subject of expression, is slack and pendant among a diversity of objects. An example :—

> In youth's soft season, when the vacant mind
> To each kind impulse of affection yields,
> When Nature charms, and love of humankind
> With its own brightness every object gilds
> Should two congenial bosoms haply meet,
> Or on the banks of Camus, hoary stream,
> Or where smooth Isis glides on silver feet,
> Nurse of the Muses each, and each their theme,
> How blith the mutual morning task they ply !

These writers approach their theme with compunction but tackle it without audacity. If their verse rarely displeases, it seldom elevates satisfaction into active pleasure. The gift of complete expression is rarer than it had been even among the minor writers of the Restoration decline.

Such are the results, perhaps, of working on the axiom that in a good style all must be congruous. This negative injunction is valueless without its completive axiom—that an element of strangeness is necessary to beauty. The only method of reconciling these two claims is the use of the conceit, or, more generally, the metaphor, wherein the maximum amount of apparent incongruity may be resolved instantaneously. The consequent pleasurable surprise is, as it were, an amount of energy liberated for the use of the poet in influencing his reader further, and, if we may say that the presence of metaphor is the sign of the poetic nature, this handling of it is a measure of poetic power. Personification, so freely used in this period, is generally a debased substitute for that *thought* which alone can create genuine structural, as apart from ornamental, metaphor.

Our reproach, then, to the poets of the middle period is not the romantic one that they did not feel enough; but that they did not think enough. The contemporary parallel is obvious.

PEDRO DE VALDIVIA—CONQUEROR OF CHILE. By R. B. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM. Heinemann, 15/- net.

This book will have to go on the history shelf; it has no chance among the memoirs or the lives. There is precious little about Valdivia himself. There is, however, a rather scrappy chronicle of the early days of Chile, a meagre account of its conquest and settlement under Pedro de Valdivia.

Having read Mr. Graham's preface, we suddenly come upon another title-page, and another title—"Pedro de Valdivia, Conqueror of Chile. Being a Short Account of his Life, Together with his Five Letters to Charles V."—So? We are to get Valdivia's own letters! Interminable epistles of a *conquistador,* we know more or less what to expect. But let us look where they are.

It is a serious-looking book, with 220 large pages, and costing fifteen shillings net. The Short Account we find occupies the first 123 pages, the remaining 94 are occupied by the translation of the five letters. So! Nearly half the book is Valdivia's; Mr. Graham only translates him. And we shall have a lot of Your-Sacred-Majestys to listen to, that we may be sure of.

When we have read both the "Short Account" and the Letters, we are left in a state of irritation and disgust. Mr. Cunninghame Graham steals all his hero's gunpowder. He deliberately—or else with the absent-mindedness of mere egoism—picks all the plums out of Valdivia's cake, puts them in his own badly-kneaded dough, and then has the face to serve us up Valdivia whole, with the plums which we have already eaten sitting as large as life in their original position. Of course, all Valdivia's good bits in his own letters read like the shamelessest plagiarism. Haven't we just read them in Mr. Graham's Short Account? Why should we have to read them again? Why does that uninspired old *conquistador* try to fob them off on us?

Poor Valdivia! That's what it is to be a *conquistador* and a hero to Mr. Graham. He puts himself first, and you are so much wadding to fill out the pages.

The Spanish *conquistadores,* famous for courage and endurance, are by now notorious for insentience and lack of imagination. Even Bernal Diaz, after a few hundred pages, makes one feel one could yell, he is so doggedly, courageously unimaginative, visionless, really *sightless*: sightless, that is, with the living eye of living discernment. Cortés, strong man as he is, is just as tough and visionless in *his* letters to His-Most-Sacred-Majesty. And Don Cunninghame, alas, struts feebly in the conquistadorial footsteps. Not only does he write without imagination, without imaginative insight or sympathy, without colour, and without real feeling, but he seems to pride himself on the fact. He is being conquistadorial.

We, however, refuse entirely to play the part of poor Indians. We are not frightened of old Dons in caracoling armchairs. We are not even amused by their pretence of being on horse-back.

A horse is a four-legged sensitive animal. What a pity the Indians felt so frightened of it! Anyhow, it is too late now for cavalierly conduct.

Mr. Graham's Preface sets the note in the very first words. It is a note of twaddling impertinence, and it runs through all the work. "Commentators tell us [do they, though?] that most men are savages at heart, and give more admiration to the qualities of courage, patience in hardships, and contempt of death than they accord to the talents of the artist, man of science, or the statesman. [Funny sort of commentators Mr. Graham reads.]

"If this is true of men, they say it is doubly true of women, who would rather be roughly loved by a tall fellow of his hands [hands, forsooth!] even though their physical and moral cuticle [*sic*] suffer some slight abrasion, than inefficiently wooed by a philanthropist. [Ah, ladies, you who are inefficiently wooed by philanthropists, is there never a tall fellow of his hands about?]

"This may be so [continues Mr. Graham], and, if it is, certainly Pedro de Valdivia was an archetype [! !—] of all the elemental qualities nature implants in a man. [He usually had some common Spanish wench for his kept woman, though we are not told concerning her cuticle.]

"Brave to a fault [chants Mr. Graham], patient and enduring to an incredible degree, of hardships under which the braveest might have quailed [what's a quail got to do with it?] loyal to king and country [Flemish Charles V] and a stout man-at-arms, he had yet no inconsiderable talents of administration, talents not so conspicuous to-day among the Latin race. [Dear-dear!]

"Thus—and I take all the above for granted—etc."

Mr. Graham has shown us, not Valdivia, but himself. He lifts a swashbuckling fountain pen, and off he goes. The result is a shoddy, scrappy, and not very sincere piece of work. The *conquistadores* were damned by their insensitiveness to life, which we call lack of imagination. And they let a new damnation into the America they conquered. But they couldn't help it. It was the educational result of Spanish struggle for existence against the infidel Moors. The *conquistadores* were good enough instruments, but they were not good enough men for the miserable and melancholy work of conquering a continent. Yet, at least, they never felt themselves *too good* for their job, as some of the inky conquerors did even then, and do still.

Mr. Graham does not take Valdivia very seriously. He tells us almost nothing about him: save that he was born in Estremadura (who cares!) and had served in the Italian and German wars, had distinguished himself in the conquest of Venezuela, and, in 1532, accompanied Pizarro to Peru. Having thrown these few facts at us, off goes Mr. Graham to the much more alluring, because much better known, story of the Pizarros, and we wonder where Valdivia comes in. We proceed with Pizarro to Peru, and so, apparently, did Valdivia, and we read a little piece of the story even Prescott has already told us. Then we get a glimpse of Almagro crossing the Andes to Chile, and very impressive little quotations from Spanish writers. After which Valdivia begins to figure, in some unsubstantial remote regions with Indian names, as a mere shadow of a colonizer. We never see the country, we never meet the man, we get no feeling of the Indians. There is nothing dramatic, no Incas, no temples and treasures and tortures, only remote colonization going on in a sort of nowhere. Valdivia becomes a trifle more real when he comes again into Peru, to fight on the loyal side against Gonzalo Pizarro and old Carvajal, but this is Peruvian history, with nothing new to it. Valdivia returns to Chile and vague colonizing; there are vague mentions of the Magellan Straits; there is a Biobio River, but to one who has never been to Chile, it might just as well be Labrador. There is a bit of a breath of life in the extracts of Valdivia's own letters. And there are strings of names of men who are nothing but names, and continual mention of Indians who also remain merely nominal. Till the very last pages, when we do find out, after he is killed, that Valdivia was a big man, fat now he is elderly, of a hearty disposition, good-natured as far as he has enough imagination, and rather common-place save for his energy as a colonizing instrument.

It is all thrown down, in bits and scraps, as Mr. Graham comes across it in Garcilaso's book, or in Gómara. And it is interlarded with Mr. Graham's own comments, of this nature: "Christians seemed to have deserved their name in those days, for faith and faith alone could have enabled them to endure such misery, and yet be always ready at the sentinel's alarm to buckle on their swords". Oh, what clichés! Faith in the proximity of gold, usually.—"Cavalry in those days played the part now played by aeroplanes," says Mr. Graham suavely. He himself seems to have got into an aeroplane, by mistake, instead of on to a conquistadorial horse, for his misty bird's-eye views are just such confusion.

The method followed, for the most part, seems to be that of sequence of time. All the events of each year are blown together by Mr. Graham's gustiness, and you can sort them out. At the same time, great patches of Peruvian history suddenly float up out of nowhere, and at the end, when Valdivia is going to get killed by the Indians, suddenly we are swept away on a biographical carpet, and forced to follow the life of the poet Ercilla, who wrote his Araucana poem about Valdivia's Indians, but who never came to Chile till Valdivia was dead. After which, we are given a feeble account of a very striking incident, the death of Valdivia. And there the Short Account dies also, abruptly, and Chile is left to its fate.

Then follow the five letters. They are moderately interesting, the best, of course, belonging to Peruvian story, when Valdivia helped the mean La Gasca against Gonzalo Pizarro. For the rest, the "loyalty" seems a little over done, and we are a little tired of the bluff, manly style of soldiers who have not imagination enough to see the things that really matter. Men of action are usually deadly failures in the long run. Their precious energy makes them uproot the tree of life, and leave it to wither, and their stupidity makes them proud of it. Even in Valdivia, and he seems to have been as human as any *conquistador,* the stone blindness to any mystery or meaning in the Indians themselves, the utter unawareness of the fact that they might have a point of view, the abject insensitiveness to the strange, eerie atmosphere of that America he was proceeding to exploit and to ruin, puts him at a certain dull level of intelligence which we find rather nauseous. The world has suffered so cruelly from these automatic men of action. Valdivia was not usually cruel, it appears. But he cut off the hands and noses of two hundred "rebels", Indians who were fighting for their own freedom, and he feels very pleased about it. It served to cow the others. But imagine deliberately chopping off one slender brown Indian hand after another! Imagine taking a dark-eyed Indian by the hair, and cutting off his nose! Imagine seeing man after man, in the prime of life, with his mutilated face streaming blood, and his wrist-stump a fountain of blood, and tell me if the men of action don't need absolutely to be held in leash by the intelligent being who *can* see these things as monstrous, root cause of endless monstrosity! We, who suffer from the bright deeds of the men of action of the past, may well keep an eye on the "tall fellows of their hands" of our own day.

Prescott never went to Mexico nor to Peru, otherwise he would have sung a more scared tune. But Mr. Graham is supposed to know his South America. One would never believe it. The one thing he could have done, re-created the landscape of Chile for us, and made us feel those Araucanians as men of flesh and blood, he never does, not for a single second. He migh as well never have left Scotland; better, for perhaps he would not have been so glib about unseen lands. All he can say of the Araucanians to-day is that they are "as hard-featured a race as any upon earth".

Mr. Graham is trivial and complacent. There is, in reality, a peculiar dread horror about the conquest of America, the story is always dreadful, more or less. Columbus, Pizarro, Cortés, Quesada, de Soto, the *conquistadores* seem all like men of doom. Read a man like Adolf Bandelier, who knows the *inside* of his America, read his *Golden Man*—El Dorado—and feel the reverberation within reverberation of horror the *conquistadores* left behind them.

Then we have Mr. Graham as a translator. In the innumerable and sometimes quite fatuous and irritating foot-notes —they are sometimes interesting—our author often gives the original Spanish for the phrase he has translated. And even here he is peculiarly glib and unsatisfactory.—" 'God knows the trouble it cost,' he says pathetically".—Valdivia is supposed to say this "pathetically". The foot-note gives Valdivia's words: "*Un bergantin y el trabajo que costó, Dios lo sabe*" "A brigantine, and the work it cost, God knows". Why *trouble* for *trabajo?* And why *pathetically?* Again, the proverb: *"A Dios rogando, y con la maza dando"*, is translated: "Praying to God, and battering with the mace".—But why *battering* for *dando,* which means merely *donnant,* and might be rendered *smiting,* or *laying on,* but surely not *battering*! Again, Philip II is supposed to say to Ercilla, who stammered so much as to be unintelligible: *"Habladme por escrito, Don Alonso!"* Which is: *Say it to me in writing, Don Alonso!*—Mr. Graham, however, translates it: "*Write to me, Don Alonso!*" . . . These things are trifles, but they show the peculiar laziness or insensitiveness to language which is so great a vice in a translator.

The motto of the book is:—

El mas seguro don de la fortuna
Es no lo haber tenido vez alguna.

Mr. Graham puts it: "The best of fortune's gifts is never to have had good luck at all".—Well, Ercilla may have meant this. The literal sense of the Spanish, anybody can make out: "The most sure gift of fortune, is not to have had it not once".—Whether one would be justified in changing the *"don de la fortuna"* of the first line into "good luck" in the second is a point we must leave to Mr. Graham. Anyhow, he seems to have blest his own book in this equivocal fashion.

D. H. LAWRENCE.

ALL SUMMER IN A DAY. An Autobiographical Fantasia. By SACHEVERELL SITWELL. Duckworth, 16/-

One of the most interesting phenomena of the literary world to-day is the advent of the Sitwell brothers and sister. That three children of one father, bred in an aristocratic family, should each exhibit a personality so pronounced as to command public excitement is, indeed, extraordinary. But that one of them should go still farther and show himself to be truly an artist of originality of temperament and technique; well, that is a miracle. I think *All Summer in a Day* presents us with that miracle. For the reader, it means a leap out of literature, and the world of competent literary cleverness, into a real life of tangled sense and nervous vitality, an incredible life compounded of almost aching sympathies and very tangible and hurtful arrogances. It has the quality of genius, that power which can call an audience together, and impose upon it, irrespective of its will and intelligence, some new fabrication which it has spun out of the common stuff of life; a fabrication which brings to that audience, passion, anger, and longing, surging back upon hearts that have long been clogged with the sands of sophistication and habit.

Mr. Sitwell does this, and to read his book is to be bewildered, angered, convinced, abused; and, over and above this, enriched with a ceaseless tropical rain of energy expressed in a new prose rhythm. The book stands for a distinct advance in the technique of English prose. The analyst might say that it bears evidence of the influence of Joyce, George Moore, and Yeats. That would be true; but it has something else, a singular speed, a nervous lateral spread, a vertical billowing, that one can compare only to the art of Berlioz and Stravinsky. And that is to say, perhaps, that here is an instrument, a technique absolutely modern, the very flesh and blood of the Spirit of the Age. What the jazz-musicians are expressing through a parodied form of the old paraphernalia of sentimentality Mr. Sitwell is doing masterfully through the more permanent vehicle of conscious psychological method.

Now let us turn in more detail to the book and seek to justify our praise. The Fantasia—too modest a title, for it belongs to the more coherent world of Imagination—is divided into two parts. The first deals with a few dimly remembered incidents, and with two vivid personages, in the childhood of the author. The second deals with one or two trivial recent incidents; so trivial in actuality that they sound laughable as subject matter—just such things as a train journey; listening to a barrel organ; a visit to the music-hall; a week-end in a north-country hotel and the author's vigil there over an adored ballerina who is prosaically at lunch. These are mere stock-in-trade of the poets of the 'nineties, stuff even then already thumbed by the Symbolists. But what an astounding new world throbbing with nervous life Mr. Sitwell creates out of them, carrying it all, buoying it up, on the energy of his prose.

I do not feel, however, that the two parts of the book are quite related in method. The first is clearly the more finished and successful, but then it does not attempt such audacious pioneering as the second. It is more *quietly* beautiful, and has the verdant langour of Maurice de Guérin over it—if one may mention names without misleading the reader into the idea that Mr. Sitwell is imitative. But I do not feel that the elegiac and wistful beauty of Part I quite sufficiently prepares us for the plunge into the four-dimensional newness of Part II. It may be that the two years spent in writing the book are responsible: for to Mr. Sitwell, who is young, pliant, and almost supernaturally impressionable, two years must be an ocean of time.

It is difficult to analyse his style. If there were a Tobias Matthay to teach the athletics of diction, we might be certain he had trained Mr. Sitwell. There is a speed and poetic virtuosity about his use of language that fill the reader's brain with a joyous delirium, such as he gets from the authentic Swinburne or from Victor Hugo. Fully to appreciate the quality I am trying to express one must read long passages; but it crops up again and again, in twists of phrase, in prolongation of a sentence rhythm, in choice of epithet. Here is an example :—

> I have described this memory left over from last year as a sort of husk, or skeleton, and this is, in its essence, true; though it is possible to fortify memory by strategem, so that what one remembers with the eyes one can assist with the ear.

It is impossible here to demonstrate fully what he can do with his magical instrument, for it would take up too much space to show how he can invoke a scene and relate its effect on his consciousness by superimposing another allegorical scene on the original and actual one. This device he frequently elaborates until the reader is racked with imaginative effort to follow. It is as though the author is gazing through a vast cone at his time-diminished self, who stands at the distant apex. He throws into this cone others, one after another, all with variously decorated interior walls. But, whatever the decoration, they all, by reason of their slotting one into the other, point at the one figure. The process is really a bold and expansive use of the method of the Imagistes, who would not allow an idea to escape them that was not first made concrete in an image. But for this image, Mr. Sitwell substitutes—as the magnitude of his method demands—day dreams, nervous trances, hypnotic fantasies, and self-soothing reveries, all impinging on the actuality of his slow-motion narrative with a logicalness that is indeed marvellous.

He is helped in this dangerous achievement by the poet in him, who chooses epithets and onomatopoems that give touch, sound, light, and very perfume to these visions. He speaks of Colonel Fantock's "stumbling, stair-blown voice" as the old man enters the house. He describes Miss Morgan's parrot that made "little plucking, quill-like noises". He tells how, in a mood of depression, he entered his hotel bedroom. "Even my own room seemed a desecrated tomb, cold and damp as are all vaults, and damper and colder from the opening that had been made. The cold water that I felt in the mood for ran from the tap not so much like falling water as like a solid, aching iron bar, and the strength of its smooth straightness was painful to the fingers and seemed to bruise their very bones".

But what of the mind, what of the judgment, that underlie and direct all this nervous genius? Inevitably, the personality is betrayed by the gesture. An examination of Mr. Sitwell's syntax reveals a characteristic of the man. It brings to mind his aristocratic and, perhaps, arrogant hereditary. We find from this analysis that in relation to his visions *he always stands still,* rigid in the trance of memory, and forces the scenes to come to him, as though they were various items in an Olympian music-hall, staged by the impresario Time. And he can betray this singularity by the use of a single word. Usually it is by an eccentric employment of pronoun or article. For instance, he uses "this" instead of the normal "that" in the following scene where he is looking down the huge white well of a hotel, gazing at the skylight of the palm-court. "*This* luxurious glass lounge glittered with a false sunlight . . . . . that shone on a forest of real palm trees (etc.). From *this* bridge it looked like the very dregs, the last brackish mud in an old disused well".

The first "this" means that, instead of visualizing the palm-court in its place as a coherent part of the building, he stoops down and for an eye-flash of time wrecks the whole architecture so that he can drag up the palm-court for scrutiny.

Such is the temper of the man. And it affects his judgment, inclining him more to the wilful than to the responsible, to the personal than to the political. Poetry is for him "something that leaves the ground", it is "the sudden appearance of a substance breathing and quivering near to one as though it were a kind of living animal". One might conclude that, since he has this conception of poetry, his faith is with Marsyas rather with Apollo. That is a fundamental division, and, when we can place an artist under one of these two deities, we may hope to be prophetic about his future re-actions to experience. For Mr. Sitwell, poetry has a panic, faunal power, that breaks through political culture and moral rule. There is much to be said for his belief, but it has this danger: that its effects are got too easily, too acrobatically; its appeal is to the perverse, the paradoxical, the bizarre in us; and that is the side of human nature which is least able to criticize itself.

RICHARD CHURCH.

COMPOSITION AS EXPLANATION. By GERTRUDE STEIN. Hogarth Press, 3/6.

It seems unlikely that Miss Stein writes in the expectation of criticism, and comment on the pastimes of private citizens is, in fact, a prerogative of the daily papers there is no inducement to infringe. Since Miss Stein in this instance, however, has had the details of her latest indoor game printed beyond the confines of America and America in Paris by a London publisher, one must infer that she invites the opinion of the public on her play. And, since her game, as luck will have it, is not a musical game, nor a painting game, but a literary game, it falls to the lot of a literary periodical to offer some remarks.

A careful perusal of *Composition as Explanation* makes this a more graceless task than Miss Stein's general reputation would lead one to suppose; for it is clear from these pages that the author plays her game with the genuine earnestness of America, and, in the place of a leisured *farceuse* amusing herself by supplying the permanent if limited demand for leg-pulling characteristic of intellectual Paris, we see the puzzled features of a sentimental, obscurely vital, and painstaking woman, of an intellect so cloudy as to be literally defective, and, one must conclude, only saved from the unhappiness common to this type of American woman by the possession of an income large enough to enable her to manufacture some kind of a personality and of contact thereby with a world unassimilable by her intelligence. Nothing could be farther from Mr. Wyndham Lewis's assumption, for example, that "Miss Stein is probably a clever, sober, intelligent woman, who has her head screwed on straight and has been a pupil of William James. She is *amused* by the stammering and fumbling of the poor lunatic; and, like an old child with a new toy, she imitates him. The comic juxtapositions and paradoxical features of the *nonsense-rhyme* continue to *amuse* this intelligent leisured student. So she goes on playing her game of witty nonsense". Mr. Lewis' remarks are worth quoting further, both as those of a generally acute observer and as representing, it may be supposed, fairly enough a current opinion of Miss Stein and her work. "Miss Stein is the best-known exponent of a literary system that consists in a sort of gargantuan mental stutter. What she is exploiting in her method is the processes of the demented. For any one less strong-minded than Miss Stein this might prove a dangerous occupation : just as you often hear it said that Pirandello's game is a 'dangerous' one. Her art is composed, first, of repetition, which lyricizes her utterances on the same principle as that of the hebrew poetry. But the repetition is also in the nature of a photograph of the unorganized word-dreaming of the mind when not concentrated for some logical functional purpose. . . . Miss Stein achieves a comic effect very often, and it is principally on this ground that her method could recommend itself". On how large a basis of actual reading of Miss Stein's prose these opinions are formed it is difficult to know. But if, as in Mr. Lewis' case, there is no reason for doubt, they are honestly come by, and since one must conclude from the present Hogarth Press publication that they are subscribed to in this country at least to the extent of taking Miss Stein seriously, for the sake of curiosity a somewhat closer examination of the subject may be pardoned than its merits demand.

Composition as Explanation is an essay in æsthetics, about four thousand words in length, two-thirds of which consists in repetition. It is written in a style accurately defined above as "the unorganized word-dreaming of the mind when not concentrated for some logical purpose". In so far as this style is not the natural expression of a mind incapable (as Miss Stein is at pains to show us when she abandons creative art for exposition) of a "logical functional purpose", it is adopted as a method of obtaining a more personal contact with the reader than the author can establish to her satisfaction by normal means. Behind it is also the conviction "If I speak very simply, miss out nothing, and put down everything exactly as it comes to me, I can't help making clear to myself and others what it is I want to say". Further analysis may be left to the psychologist, since what is interesting is not the means of expression of a defective intelligence but the reaction to it of the normal mind, which is on the pattern of our natural conclusion on seeing the fat lady in a booth, "She does it for money". Confronted with a congenital disability exposed and not concealed, and unable to conceive such unaccustomed and psychologically monstrous behaviour unmotivated, we can only assimilate it by postulating some kind of "reason" or "purpose", in this case simply "She does it on purpose"; and our ingenuity, as Mr. Lewis's, expends itself on discovering the purpose, which resolves itself into a comic effect, obtained on the principle of the philosophers of Laputa. Fortified by discovering her desperate expedient accepted as a freak of high spirits, Miss Stein can continue her method of adjusting herself to the world, doing honestly what is now expected of her with a good conscience and satisfactory psychological results.

To the suggestion that behind the imitation of behaviour there must, of course, lie a predisposition, but that that is as far as it goes, one can only reply that Miss Stein has here been unwise enough to provide the refutation herself. She has been sufficiently emboldened to attempt in good faith and as much for her own enlightenment as for others' an explanation of her artistic principles. And in *Composition as Explanation* there is nothing so sensational as dementia, imitated or genuine; what there is is a pathetic attempt, too pitiable to criticize, to coordinate into some kind of rational statement the romantic Americo-Parisian phantasmagoria of life and art which do duty as reality for the author and the audience she writes for. On the occasions when Miss Stein expresses herself directly we are given the ordinary clichés of her kind, transferring the emotions and ideas of religion to a hypothetical world where early Christians, under the guise of artists, suffer contempt, poverty, and martyrdom, while the kingdom of heaven on earth, under the name of Composition, rises about them, unlike anything that has been before, and in which Picasso figures ensconced in Rousseau landscapes, while they listen to the strains of *"Les Biches"*, impersonate the quiring angels of the heavenly city. While these are the best possible notions for a patron of art, they provide an indifferent basis for an explanation of it, as Miss Stein in her bewildered way confesses, puzzling along: "Now there is still something else, the time-sense in the composition. This is what is always a fear, a doubt, a judgment, and a conviction. The quality in the creation of expression, the quality in a composition that makes it go dead just after it has been made is very troublesome".

There is neither the space nor the necessity, however, to dissect Miss Stein's essay in detail, which apart from its pseudo-simplicity—"Just how much my work is known to you I do not know. I feel that, perhaps, it would be just as well to tell the whole of it"—is quite undeserving of so harsh a word as charlatanism; and, while it might be of interest to the educational psychologist, merits notice here only as an instructively concrete example of the possibilities of mass suggestibility, which, on the evidence till now at our disposal, we are justified in presuming to be unlimited.

J. F. HOLMS.

ORPHEUS, OR THE MUSIC OF THE FUTURE. By W. J. TURNER.

TERPANDER, OR MUSIC AND THE FUTURE. By E. J. DENT.

To-day and To-morrow Series. Kegan Paul, 2/6 each.

The editors of the "To-day and To-morrow Series" are to be congratulated on the authors whom they have chosen to contribute essays on the subject of music. Mr. Dent—or as I suppose one should say now, Professor Dent, since he has recently been appointed to the vacant chair of music at Cambridge—is undoubtedly one of the few distinguished musical critics of the older generation, besides being the president of the International Society for Contemporary Music, and Mr. Turner occupies an equally eminent, though hardly so official, a position among the younger men. The consequence of this happy choice has been that, instead of the fatuous and wearisome speculations on the possible future employment by composers of the quarter-tone scale or the probable influence of the gramophone, pianola, or broadcasting, on musical appreciation, which we should certainly have expected—and received—from the ordinary musical hacks, we get two extremely readable and well-written essays dealing with yesterday rather than with to-morrow, and with the eternal, fundamental problems of the art rather than with the particular aspects of them which happen to be most prominent to-day. Mr. Dent, it is true, does start off with a few pages on the present and returns to it at the end, but he has nothing to say about the future at all. Similarly, Mr. Turner, at the end of his book, adds a few perfunctory pages on the future, as an afterthought, but that is all; he does not even touch on the present.

Both writers, then, belie the title of the series and their own sub-titles to a great extent, but this is hardly a serious defect. Indeed, as far as Mr. Dent is concerned, one is inclined to wish that he had confined his attention to yesterday and left to-day alone, for by far the best part of his book is the summary or survey of musical history from the earliest times up to the eighteenth century, which could not have been better done; the weakest part is that in which he makes definite æsthetic pronouncements and gives utterance to his own somewhat peculiar personal predilections concerning this century and the last, and this, in my humble opinion, could hardly have been worse done. In other words, while one agrees with almost everything which the professor of music at Cambridge University has to say, one disagrees with almost everything which the president of the International Society for Contemporary Music has to say.

For example, at the very outset he says that recent developments in music constitute a wholly new departure, and the ordinary listener finds himself, in relation to it, "in the position of a man who sets out to learn a language which has no connexion with the Indo-European stock . . . . a vocabulary of words which bear not the remotest resemblance to any in French or German, Latin or Greek . . . an entirely strange system of syntax for the expression of unfamiliar ideas". This is sheer nonsense. In the words of a recent writer in *The Times Literary Supplement,* à propos of Miss Gertrude Stein, "It is a curious thing that, when a writer has carried a development as far as it will go and has in fact used it up, then he is hailed as the beginner of a new school"; and the musician who cannot see at once the obvious derivation of Schönberg's idiom from Schumann and Mendelssohn, of Stravinsky's idiom from Borodin, Moussorgsky, and especially Korsakov, has simply no feeling for music at all, and would be well advised to drop it altogether and take up golf or ludo instead. I would go even farther and say that anyone who professes to find it more difficult to understand the music of, say, Scriabin or Stravinsky—I do not say Schönberg in this connexion, for he is undoubtedly a profound and somewhat difficult thinker—than Bach's Art of Fugue or the later works of Beethoven obviously understands nothing at all, least of all Bach and Beethoven. On the contrary, the music of Scriabin and Stravinsky is so immediately intelligible and superficially attractive, so lacking in both depth of thought or subtlety of execution, that one very soon tires of it.

Again, it is quite untrue that "The history of music shows us clearly that deliberately descriptive music rarely stands the test of time". On the contrary, the history of music shows us clearly that there is no composer of eminence, except perhaps Chopin, whose work does not largely consist of music which is "descriptive" in some sense, either through association with a literary text, as in song, opera, or cantata, or in another and less direct way. It is probably not an exaggeration to say that about three quarters of the world's greatest music has some connexion with something outside itself, some extraneous implication, whether literary, pictorial, illustrative, psychological, or anything else you like to call it. The *Sacræ Cantiones* of Byrd, the *Madrigali Spirituali* of Palestrina, the *Cantatas* of Bach, are as elaborately descriptive as the *Salome* or *Elektra* of Strauss. Everybody will, of course, admit that, "Unless the work is intelligible simply as music alone, constructed on its own purely musical principles, apart from all external considerations, it must fall short of perfection as a work of art"; but that is quite a different matter. The point is that this intrinsically musical perfection can gain an added significance and appeal through association with, or, more accurately, through embodying and expressing, an idea which we loosely call literary or illustrative—loosely, because it does not necessarily follow that because a conception can be expressed in words, or in line and colour, it is, therefore, proper only to that particular medium and unfitted for musical expression also. The boundaries of the arts overlap to a great extent and many of the greatest artistic themes are capable of realization in any medium whatsoever.

To give a concrete example of what I mean, could anyone seriously suggest that Vittoria's profoundly moving motet, generally sung in Easter Week, on the words *O vos omnes qui transitis per viam, attendite, et videte, si est dolor similis sicut dolor meus*, etc., is merely a beautiful pattern of four interwoven voices? For it is not merely that the music is *associated with* the words—their tremendous significance is indissolubly *embodied in* the music.

Do not let my meaning be misunderstood; I hold no brief for, any more than against, what is called "programme music" *per se*. I am capable of deriving as much pleasure from a fugue or symphony as from a song or an opera; it is a different kind of pleasure, that is all, but both are equally legitimate. Musical sounds constitute an artistic language which is capable of expressing the most diverse ideas and conceptions, like words or any other artistic medium, and to attempt to limit it, as Mr. Dent does, to a single restricted field of activity, to the expression and realization of a single order of ideas and conceptions, is the merest preciosity.

It is this rather out-of-date, eighteen-ninety, æsthetical attitude towards art that goes such a long way to spoiling Mr. Dent's book, which is a pity, because, as I have already said, parts of it are very good indeed. Another glaring example of it is to be found in the classification of music-lovers into three distinct categories: those for whom it is a pleasurable physical experience, those for whom the appeal is mainly or exclusively emotional, and those who have learnt to contemplate it intellectually. He admits that the same person may at different times be in any one of these categories, according to the particular work he is hearing; it does not seem to occur to him that one may be in all three at the same time. In fact, I would even venture to suggest that the listener who does not appreciate a work in all three ways at once, physically, emotionally, and intellectually, is simply not a complete musician; and that the work which does not appeal to him in all three ways is not a perfect work of art, or even a good one. The great work of art appeals to the whole man, not merely to a part of him, and only the man who is capable of a complete reaction to the work of art can possibly be a good critic.

That Mr. Dent is, artistically speaking, not quite all there is clearly shown by the way in which he dismisses the whole of the music of the last century with the remark that "What has survived (of it), quaintly artificial though its freshness may be, is the music that was made only for ephemeral entertainment". If this is anything more than a mere *boutade,* and he really means that Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Berlioz, Liszt, Wagner, Brahms, Verdi, Chopin, and a few dozen others are completely negligible, he is only confessing that one half of music, of art, of life itself, is a sealed book to him. This alone is sufficient to disqualify him from being taken seriously. It is only fair to add that, where the other half is concerned, he shows himself to be the possessor of a keen and penetrating critical intelligence.

Mr. Turner stands at the very opposite pole to Mr. Dent. Indeed, it would be difficult to find two critics more completely opposed to each other in their whole outlook upon art. So far from subscribing to Mr. Dent's theory of absolute music, Mr. Turner writes that he does not believe "there is any sensation or feeling of which man is capable in the presence of the natural world which may not be expressed in music". While Mr. Dent questions "whether the artistic expression of Beethoven's lofty idealism is still convincing to modern ears", Mr. Turner is of the opinion that "the profoundest, most fundamental note in music, so far, has been struck by Beethoven", and "just as the sun is the centre of the physical universe . . . . so Beethoven is our temporary absolute in the world of music".

By far the best part of Mr. Turner's book is his dithyramb on Beethoven; indeed, I cannot think of any writer in any language who has expressed so well the feelings and emotions which Beethoven's music arouses in those for whom the later quartets and piano sonatas are the highest point to which music has yet attained. Mr. Turner is not by any means an ideal critic; his judgments are too often hasty and ill-considered, capricious and intolerant, always intensely subjective, but the fact remains that he has flashes of genuine insight, moments of real understanding which more than compensate for his faults. In my opinion, he is one of the few musical critics in this country at the present time whose work is of any value or importance.

CECIL GRAY.

COLLECTED POEMS, 1913-25. By HERBERT READ. Faber and Gwyer, 6/-

Readers who have a previous acquaintance with the poetry here collected will not need to be assured beforehand that this work has nothing in common with the productions which various anthologists succeed in palming off on the public as "representative of the best tendencies in contemporary verse". To indicate the gulf between Mr. Read's attitude to his art and the æsthetic which can prophesy "immortality for more than a score of living lyrists" it is enough to mention that he is active in his relations with language. Yet, though these poems manifest many of the qualities of an independent poetic, the uppermost impression left after an attentive reading is one of frustration, of the failure to integrate thought into poetry.

To appreciate Mr. Read's actual achievement the sections in this volume should be read in the inverse order of their arrangement, that is, in chronological order. The four Songs of Innocence at the back are quite banal as expression, though they disclose an emotion that might more rightly have been embodied than suppressed in later work. The imagist pieces named "Eclogues" are exercises in the precise word and concision of form. Apart from the consideration of their disciplinary value in the formation of a style, these poems, like so many of their kind, suggest that the perfection they occasionally achieve is an easy and inconsiderable perfection to set against the resources of the rhetoric it displaces. In the war poems, "Naked Warriors", a definite impulse begins to be felt behind the writing. "The Execution of Cornelius Vane" and the last movement of the preceding poem use a spare idiom and sunken rhythms to present a spare subject and a sunken emotion; and, with the realization that there is here sometimes a positive balance of free expression to compensate for the poet's deliberate limitation of his instrument, the reader himself is to the same degree blessed with a free impression. Freedom of this sort is rare in Mr. Read's poems. The purification of his technique with which he is patently concerned throughout is a motive which commands our respect, but this consideration, unaccompanied by frequent evidence of actual success in the result, is one which elucidates the poet's primary qualities, and, therefore, helps to give direction to a judgment of his work : it cannot be a main reference in such a judgment, for it is a preliminary which in the act of æsthetic appreciation has place only as fulfilment or unfulfilment.

Mr. Read is nearest to exercising freedom on his own conditions in "Monologue Addressed to A Wandering Tyro" :—

A blindman's buff and no distilling
of song for the woeful
scenes of agony. Never
will rest
the mind an instant in its bird-like flutterings . . .

A cynic race — to bleak ecstasies
we are driven by our
sombre destiny. Men's shouts
are not
glad enough to echo in our groined hearts. We know

war and its dead and famine's bleached bones;
black rot overreaching
the silent pressure of life
in fronds
of green ferns and in the fragile shell of white flesh.

The impulse in this poem is unusually direct, and as a result the rather debilitated intellectual idiom used in the closing stanzas flows in an equal stream with more expansive diction; it does not here, as so often elsewhere in this volume, obstruct the stream of the poem with mud islets of an unassimilated functional jargon. The question of diction is an important one in Mr. Read's verse. Theoretically, he would seem to be proceeding on a sound Wordsworthian plan of selecting a prevalent and distinctively contemporary vocabulary to break-in for the purposes of poetry. Actually, the effect of his general practice is to make us realize that, with the appearance of ruthlessly stripping poetic language of its conventional ornaments and romantic excrescences, he has really taken over ready-made an impoverished system of terms from scientific philosophy, and, on the whole, left them in the same condition as they wear in a text-book. One need only think of Shakespeare or Donne to know that the integration of new nomenclatures is profitable for poetry. But Mr. Read has not the imaginative refinement necessary to multiply the relations of fixed terms so that, without losing any of their precision, they lend themselves to common purposes and become, as Wordsworth says, "material to us as enjoying and suffering human beings". Perhaps that is why, after a poem or a passage in which the novel diction fails to catch fire, a poem or passage of an archaic formalism often follows. One of these poems is actually named "Formal Incantation", and this, as well as the section in "Mutations of the Phœnix" beginning "Phœnix, bird of terrible pride", shows Mr. Read more at his ease in the secondary impulse derivable from sympathy with an essentially romantic mood, than he generally is when the material of first-hand experience refuses to yield itself productively to an allusive or a retrospective assimilation in place of the dual process which precedes the making of a genuine poem: the identity of poet and incident and the inpredictable, yet inevitable, differentiation.

However builded the emotion
The imagination's mute,

he confesses in "The Analysis of Love", and often when the postponed process of realization seems to be working itself up within the poem a desperate self-admonition interposes and reveals the strain of having to live the poetic experience backwards :

> You can't escape : don't escape
> poor ceaseless human mind.
> Better leave things finite.
> See where that curled surf clashes
> in a wreath, in a running crest,
>   in a fan of white flame !
>
> O turn your milk dim eyes
> To outer things ! See where a haze
> Trembles against the hard horizon,
> Quivering in a rhythm that calls to mind
> The ultimate harmony of the world !

A *haze* that "calls to mind the ultimate harmony of the world!" St. Thomas Aquinas would certainly have had something to say about that. And Dryden, that other fashionable mogul—would he endorse such a metaphor as this?—

> The factories ah slender graces
> sly naked damsels nodding their downy plumes.

These are ominous signs, and in a larger space it would have been a task less welcome than simple to offer evidence as conclusive as the verse-form permits, of the fundamental inadequacy of this poetry.

BERTRAM HIGGINS.

Among other books of verse received we have to mention the following :—

POEMS. By Peter Quennell. *Chatto and Windus.*
THE CLOSED CHAPLET. By Laura Gottschalk. *Hogarth Press.*

AN AMERICAN TRAGEDY. By THEODORE DREISER. Constable, 10/6.

This book is a remarkable example of what can be done with words by a man who has apparently not the slightest aptitude for the handling of them, provided he has patience, determination, and a purpose. Mr. Dreiser is quite incapable of realizing the sensation of an object ; instead, he enumerates its attributes as they might be discerned by a careful, unprejudiced observer, describes its materials and method of manufacture, and tells its history. It is impossible to be incredulous in the face of all this. Similarly, each character and incident of the plot is laboriously authenticated ; to the least important persons are attached, in addition to a physiognomical description and a biography, analyses on the principles of, at least, two schools of psychology.

The result is a tedious, but very solid and quite undeniable piece of work; one, moreover, that has obviously been designed from beginning to end. Unfortunately, Mr. Dreiser's purpose in all this has been merely to make his story as credible as any not very unusual Criminal Court story. Consequently, the misadventures of his adolescent hero have no more meaning than the greater part of most evening newspapers. And, as to the latter, the soft and the hard-hearted readers will respond after their manner; no judgment is *compelled.* To term such a production a Tragedy has the authority of sub-editors, but of no one more authoritative.

DRAGON'S BLOOD. By ROMER WILSON. Collins, 7/6.

This is a novel so unlike the usual machine-made "well-written" study of social relations that the temptation is to over-estimate its worth. Actually, though Miss Wilson is capable of being emotionally, almost hysterically stirred by transcendental, philosophic ideas, she does not appear to be able to render them in novelistic form. Her intellectual grasp of them is not sufficiently secure for her to adopt an authoritative manner of telling a story deduced from conceptualist premises; on the other hand, her attempt to invent a story and characters that shall "realize" the defeatist, "decline-of-the-west" trend of thought in post-war Germany is foiled by the circumstance that, as her invention develops, it tends to contradict its metaphysical basis. It is not surprising, therefore, that, though the story in its early chapters proceeds with considerable verve, towards the end it should be kept in motion only by numerous explosions of sensational incident, and conclude with a section that for bathetic sentimentality must be hard to match in English or German popular literature.

GOOD-BYE, STRANGER. By STELLA BENSON. Macmillan, 7/6.

Though this is probably the best novel of the season, it cannot be said that Miss Benson has yet written the novel it is to be hoped she one day will. She has such an admirably lucid method that any uncertainty of intention is at once apparent. Of this book, the *dénouement* is sufficiently out of key to suggest that it expresses the author's desire to be morally fair to her creatures as a judge, rather than faithful to her imaginative conception. But Miss Benson's attitude is intelligent and critical, and her impulse is that of a writer, not of a balked social reformer or other humanitarian, as is that of most "serious" novelists. And her style is genuinely witty; that is to say, it is neither purely verbal nor funny in its effect, but consists of the tersest possible expression of unexpected relations, the perception of which is an intellectual activity.

C. H. R.

TRANSITION. By EDWIN MUIR. Hogarth Press, 7/6.

In his preface to these papers on contemporary writers, some of which appeared in *The Calendar*, Mr. Muir disclaims any attempt at a final valuation. "A true judgment can only be passed by one who has a grasp of all the aspects of the case. In the case of contemporary literature, we can be witnesses, defendants, or partisans; we can be nothing more". Decisive statements do emerge, nevertheless; it is in the nature of the case that they should do so; and, indeed, Mr. Muir, more than most critics, continuously uses, without noteworthy suspensions of judgment, the language of valuation. So that we are not surprised, at the end of his introductory essay, to meet with a more candid avowal of the aims of his criticism which contradicts that earlier assertion: "The rank of these writers will be determined by the thing which at present determines their value for us: the profundity, comprehensiveness, and truth of their criticism of life". These studies, in fact, manifest a serious intention, by applying this test, to determine the rank of some of the most prominent of ascendant writers; and, in two final chapters on contemporary poetry and fiction, Mr. Muir interprets the general situation in terms of the theory that gives its name to the volume.

It would be going too far afield to inquire how far this conception is adequate to the affirmations which loom out of Mr. Muir's criticism. His adoption of it as an explanation of our disorders is, perhaps, perfunctory. Every age aware of its own processes is apt to conceive itself as an age of transition; the Elizabethan in particular, in which we seem to discern a rounded life, was itself morbidly conscious of instability, and the critics of the time, its satirists and pamphleteers, were in constant expectation of the Apocalyptic Horsemen. Certainly we are without a world-order to ameliorate the individual's labour of creation, but one would have to look farther back than the Victorians for a state of society tending in its nature to promote rather than to handicap the production of a fine literature. Arnold's doctrine of the congenial period as the pre-requisite of a masterpiece is hardly borne out in a long view of English poetry. What strikes us there is rather the frequency with which one or two men, in fulfilling great gifts, provide the lines of expansion to a number of other writers whose natures, lacking autonomous power, can approach their perfection only when that condition has been satisfied, and whose collective indebtedness is afterwards seen to constitute a period. A transition theory applied to literature is not likely to be fruitful unless it comprehends with a perception of the present and a knowledge of the superseded order a confident sense of that which is to come. In *Literature and Revolution* Trotsky uses such a theory with telling effect, but then, with his philosophy of history as a mechanism in which "mind limps after reality", the future for him is hardly more than a logical projection of known influences.

Mr. Muir's estimate of the contemporary situation is largely true while it rests on the evident fact of the dislocation of institutions. Among much that is merely valid the reader will be enlightened by occasional crystallizations. The modern poet's task is "not so much to treat the universe of life as to evoke it"; "In Miss Sitwell's transposition of imagery we do not feel that an obstacle has been overcome, but simply that the vision has been shifted"; Mr. Eliot's "critical method consists in pressing a small lever and in thereby releasing an unexpectedly heavy weight"; "His (Mr. Huxley's) art is not one of comprehension, but of exposure". But it is not often that Mr. Muir draws valuable inferences from such observations, which are, after all, rather the advanced agreements on which an original analysis would be based than the items of a re-construction. This requirement would not arise, and such criticisms as those just quoted could be welcomed on their merits without reference to a broader context, if it were not that certain assumptions pervade the whole which suggest that the consistency of various statements could only be established in a critical scheme taking its rise from elements to which literature is not primary. Though there is no doubt that the works of literature he discusses do often stimulate Mr. Muir to profitable trains of thought, the outcome is more frequently the expression of a series of *cultural* relations than a passage of literary criticism proper. There is nothing to be said against this form of comment, in itself; on the contrary, literary criticism at its most consummate, while it never quite succeeds in adapting its idiom to the language of general cultural relations, is always tending to do so. But there is all the difference in the world between a cultural commentary which springs out of the object of criticism and is uninterruptedly quickened by it, and one which, deriving whatever feeling it still preserves from another source of thought, attaches the object as an illustration of itself. Mr. Muir's comments betray a lack of responsiveness to the verbal and differentiated qualities of writing, without which a critic is always liable to confuse intention in a work of literature with performance; and still more liable to praise or deprecate it out of a preconception of appositeness. It is probably a confusion of intention with performance that causes Mr. Muir to remark of the barrenly precious quotation on page 78 that "in the daring and fullness of the metaphors it has a remote indebtedness to Homer"; as it was, perhaps, a preconception of appositeness that led him to see an inexorable concern with essentials in that most tactful of sentimentalists, Mr. Stephen Hudson. But what can have moved him to declare that in this clumsy couplet :—

. . . "little marches all beribboned gay
That move down the lime avenues away",

Miss Sitwell "has put the pathos of life in a few words"? To read these essays with the care they invite is to be constantly aware of inconsistencies which, because of their fundamental nature, cannot be passed over as mere slips of thought. To take one instance: in an otherwise interesting appreciation of *Ulysses,* after saying that in this book "the dual values of the *Portrait,* the values of life and art, of reality and imagination, are developed side by side until each attains its maximum significance, and the discrepancy between them issues in a form of humour which, through its intellectual profundity, becomes universal"; twenty pages farther on, in an endeavour to define the limitation which he feels to be in Mr. Joyce's work, Mr. Muir proceeds thus: "He is not satisfying, simply because one part of life he almost completely ignores; and by its lack of relief *Ulysses* sometimes oppresses us: the complementary part of our nature is interdicted expression. Mr. Joyce's book has neither the breadth nor the sanity of supreme comic art". The impression behind this contradiction is, perhaps, not unfounded. But the assumption supporting it—which is the major assumption underlying all these essays—of a continuous humanistic tradition with which our age is momentarily out of harmony, is one which should be used to subserve criticism, and not to stretch over its gaps.

BERTRAM HIGGINS.

DOWNLAND MAN. By H. J. MASSINGHAM. Cape, 21/-.
FEE, FI, FO, FUM: or The Giants in England. By H. J. MASSINGHAM. Kegan Paul, 2/6.

In these two books, Mr. Massingham has professed to re-examine the remains of the first (pre-Celtic) civilization in England in the light of the hypotheses of the school of cultural anthropology led by Professor G. Elliott Smith and Mr. W. J. Perry. Since this school holds that the megalithic civilization throughout the world was propagated by a process of diffusion from a single centre—Egypt—Mr. Massingham's task has been to demonstrate that the English monuments are derived from Egyptian prototypes, are copies that differ from their models only to an extent that can be accounted for by factors of time, distance, and locality. It is claimed, for example, that the long barrows of England are derived from the rock-cut tombs of France, Spain, Portugal, and Crete, which, in their turn, are said to be modifications of the mastaba-tombs of ancient Egypt. Further, since it was the search for "givers-of-life"—at first, and always pre-eminently, gold and pearls, but, later, other minerals and substances, such as amber and resin, used in funereal cult—that led the Ancient Mariners (as Mr. Massingham calls them) to explore and colonize so many, and often so inhospitable, regions of the earth, he has had to show that the distribution of the settlements of the archaic civilization was determined by the presence or absence of such stuffs.

It is not my intention, nor is this the place, to examine piecemeal the evidence Mr. Massingham offers, but, emphatically, comment is called for on the spirit and manner in which it is collected and set forth. Archæological evidence is so fragmentary, literally as well as figuratively, that the greatest objectivity in interpretation is necessary. Thus, though Mr. Massingham asserts that Stonehenge was built after Avebury; that sundry vases of an Ægean design are evidence, not of trade, but of settlement; in neither case do the actual objects bear him out. They can be accounted for by either explanation, and Mr. Massingham's choice is purely sentimental, or, if he prefers it, theoretical. One of the virtues of Perry's *The Children of the Sun* is that its method is almost fool-proof. The case for diffusion, as he presents it, rests on the wide distribution of a complex of cultural elements, none of the more fundamental of which is found without its concomitants. By isolating these elements, it is possible to institute a study of culture-sequences throughout the region surveyed, and to claim, on the basis of that study, that the historical sequence is everywhere the same. Further, when these elements are re-combined, a similar conclusion can be drawn as to the complex as a whole. Obviously, since a single well-authenticated instance to the contrary will invalidate these generalizations, the method is one that can easily be controlled and its results are, in the absence of such contrary instances, trustworthy.

Now, though it may be argued of any one element of culture taken alone that it has developed naturally and spontaneously in all parts of the world, such an argument becomes very improbable when applied to the whole heterogeneous collection of practices and beliefs, many of which are far from being natural responses to the conditions of the locality in which they are found. Therefore, it seems more likely that this, the first *food-producing* civilization, spread outwards from one centre than that it was spontaneously generated in many.

Obviously, until the hypothesis of diffusion has been exhaustively and critically "tried-out" over as wide an area as possible, it cannot be considered as established. Mr. Perry himself, though his survey is as remarkable for its detail as for its width, admits gaps further knowledge of which may destroy his system. Such a gap, for instance, is the Maya civilization. Not only is it probable that the remains of many forgotten cities have yet to be found, but it is certain that those recently discovered have been but summarily investigated.

It is clearly of the greatest importance, not only to anthropology, but to sociology and the study of culture in general, that these gaps should be filled in. Such a gap England still is, despite Mr. Massingham. "The book is entirely his own work," declares Professor Elliott Smith in his introduction, like a schoolmaster vouching for his pupil's "own, unaided effort", and, truly, the internal evidence supports that statement. Mr. Massingham greatly scorns those archæologists who came to their subject with "a set of pre-conceived ideas", but does not sufficiently abhor the practice to avoid it himself. In a sense, this is fortunate, for his books are rendered almost tolerable by their ideas; these, of course, are borrowed. But, though he has borrowed the ideas of his mentors, he has not been able to acquire any of their expository or critical ability. Indeed, the notion of criticizing his evidence does not appear to have occurred to Mr. Massingham. His plan seems to have been not so much to survey the evidence in order to discover how far it supports the diffusion hypothesis, nor even, with more bias, to set out such as is in its favour, as to assert that it all does. Obviously, if a theory is to be used to explain facts, the argument that such explanation proves the theory is circular. It may be that Mr. Massingham is not so simple minded as he appears, for he entangles every tiniest concrete item he condescends to with the flowers of journalistic fine-writing. That supposition would account for the inclusion of the testimony of the birds ("They know!") and of the stones ("This was the kind of talk the stones and I had together . . ."). Actually, had Mr. Massingham confined himself to a description of the evidence and such arguments as were suggested by the "common-sense and common honesty" that Professor Elliott Smith says, more forcibly than correctly, "is what is most needed in humanitarian study today", *Downland Man* would have been not half so fat a volume, nor nearly so tedious.

C. H. Rickword.